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Housing as Urbanism: The role of Housing Policies in Reducing Urban Inequalities.

A study of post 2006 Housing Programmes in Puente Alto, Chile

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I, Camila Loreto Cociña Varas, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

This thesis is dedicated to my friend, colleague, master and comrade Rodrigo Salcedo, whose passion for life taught me to enjoy intensely the processes of learning and sharing, of participating in politics and discussions, taking care of those one loves, and finding joy in everything we do; in sum, to live and work joyfully and passionately.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the role that housing policies have in reducing inequalities through the production of cities. It emerges from intellectual and political concerns: historically the success of housing policies has been mainly measured by quantitative achievements and has been linked to poverty alleviation. But as poverty becomes a rather multidimensional concept, aspects of inequality become important. Politically, studying housing policies in Chile just in terms of their relationship with poverty could be not just reductionist, but even potentially harmful: for thirty years, Chile has had financially effective housing policies, with poverty reduction and quantitative achievements considered widely successful, and yet levels of inequality remain stagnant and the lives of those who inhabit the products of these policies seem to be full of injustice.

To explore these issues, this research first discusses its normative positions regarding the definition of inequalities reduction as the object of a social policy. Then a series of theoretical debates on inequality, space and housing are presented, developing a framework of analysis and proposing a series of conceptual bridges between housing and inequalities, defining 'housing as urbanism' and recognising its condition as an economic, social and political device.

Empirical work was conducted in Bajos de Mena, a peripheral territory of Santiago, Chile, examining two post-2006 housing programmes that have attempted to decrease urban inequalities, and exploring the extent to which they are actually contributing to tackling the problem of inequality. The main challenges identified are summarised under five themes: institutional order, sectorial agendas, fragmentation and targeting; individual choices vs. collective processes; clientelism and dependency; design as a transformative tool; and the problem of scale, i.e. land policy and citywide processes. Through researching another two urban programmes in the area, existing institutional efforts addressing the challenges identified are explored, leading to the conclusion that urban programmes involve important attempts that need to be in conversation with traditional housing programmes in order to achieve their potential.

This thesis aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the consequences of housing policies in a complex territory. The main argument is that housing policies can play a role in reducing multiple inequalities, but to do so housing must be understood *as urbanism*, as a multiple-scales process with agency at the economic, social and political level. In discussing this argument, this research also attempts to contribute to the discipline of urbanism. Establishing stronger links between housing and inequality, it seeks to open up new spaces for solidarities within the urban scale, exploring their translation into policy challenges, and the potentials of urbanism to articulate policies at different scales.

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BdM	Bajos de Mena
CASEN	Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional *National Survey of Socioeconomic Characterisation*
CChC	Cámara Chilena de la Construcción *Chilean Chamber of Construction*
CCSS	Condominios Sociales *Social Condos*
CNDU	Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano *National Committee of Urban Development*
CORMU	Corporación de Mejoramiento Urbano *Corporation of Urban Improvements*
CORVI	Corporación de la Vivienda *Corporation of Housing*
CVD	Consejo Vecinal de Desarrollo *Neighbourhood Development Committee*
DDU	División de Desarrollo Urbano *Urban Development Division*
DFL2	Decreto con Fuerza de Ley 2 *Decree-Law 2*
DPH	División de Política Habitacional *Housing Policy Division*
DS1	Decreto Supremo 1 *Supreme Decree 1*
DS49	Decreto Supremo 49: Fondo Solidario de Elección de Vivienda *Supreme Decree 49: Solidary found for housing choice*
EGIS	Entidades de Gestión Inmobiliaria Social *Social-Estate Management Body*
FPS	Ficha de Protección Social *Social Protection Record*
FSV1	Fondo Solidario de Vivienda 1 *Solidary found for housing 1*
GORE	Gobierno Regional *Regional Government*
MINVU	Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo *Ministry of Housing and Urbanism*
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PIS	Proyecto de Integración Social *Socially Integrated Project*
PNDU	Política Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano *National Policy of Urban Development*
PNUD UNDP	Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo *United Nations Development Programme*
PPPF	Programa de Protección del Patrimonio Familiar *Family assets protection programme*
PQMB	Programa Quiero Mi Barrio *Programme I Love my Neighbourhood*
PRMS	Plan Regulador Metropolitano de Santiago *Metropolitan Regulatory Plan of Santiago*
SERVIU	Servicio de Vivienda y Urbanismo *Service of Housing and Urbanism*
SEREMI	Secretaría Regional Ministerial *Regional Ministerial Secretary*
SIMCE	Sistema de Medición de la Calidad de la Educación *System for Measurement of the Quality of Education*
UF	Unidad de Fomento *Unit of account*

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: How I got here and what to expect from this Thesis

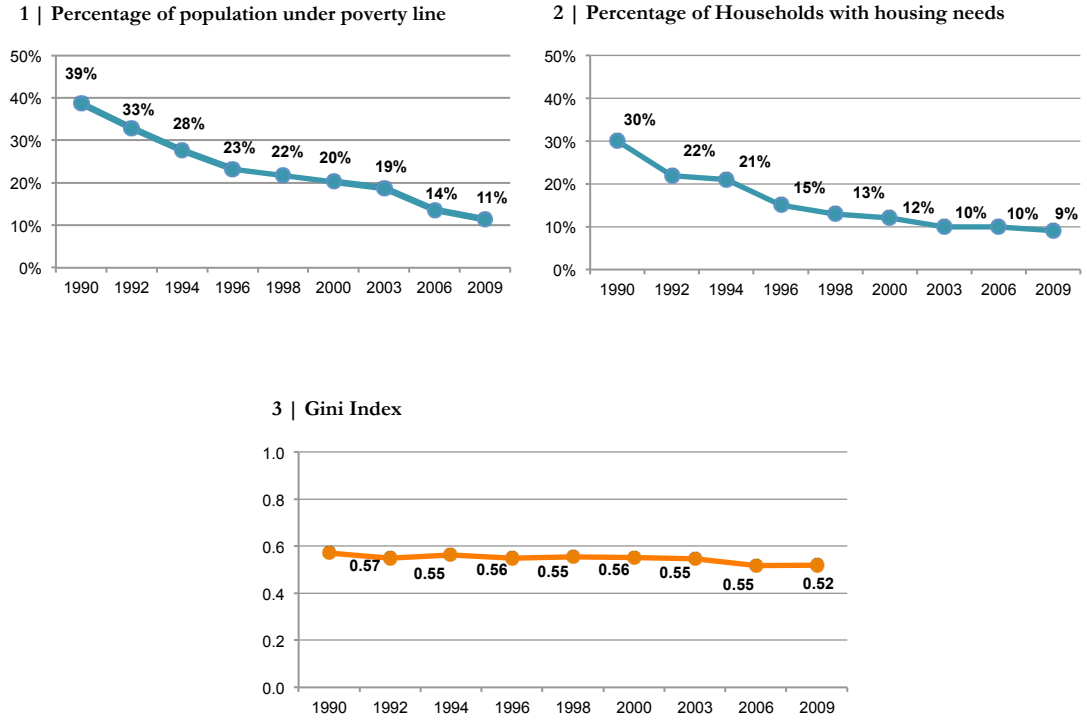
Introduction: How did I get here?

The first time I thought about this research, I did so with three charts in mind. It seemed as if the international study of social housing and housing policies had been largely focused on their relation to poverty alleviation, and that their failure or success was intimately related to their achievements in terms of poverty reduction. But it also seemed that studying housing policies in Chile only in terms of their relationship to poverty could be not just reductionist, but even potentially harmful. For thirty years Chile had had housing policies that from the point of view of their financial effectiveness and targeting of resources were considered successful. And yet the life of those who inhabited the products of these policies was full of injustices, misery and wretchedness.

The three charts I had in mind (Figure 1.1) show data about Chile: the reduction of poverty for a 20-year period after the return of democracy in 1990, the reduction of housing deficit during the same period, and the levels of income inequality measured through the Gini Index. The first two graphs were very consistent, with a reduction of poverty from almost 40% to 11% in 20 years, and the number of families with housing needs reduced from 30% to less than 10% during the same period. The post-dictatorship miracle, with its positive numbers and poverty reduction achievements, had an undeniable corresponding housing narrative, in which the notion of *success* also seemed irrefutable. Yes, there were critics regarding the kind of city that these policies had built; yes, there were questions about the high levels of urban segregation; yes, there were reasonable doubts about the quality of the houses produced and the impact on their inhabitants' lives. Yet those two charts were there, and in an international context they were sufficient proof of success.

But then the third chart tells a different story: while housing deficit and poverty had similar reduction rates, indices of inequality showed a society that had moved very timidly, remaining almost static in terms of the reduction of them. And even if inequality indices might be imperfect and limited, they were consistent in showing that while poverty had been systematically reduced, that was not the case for inequality, or at least not to the extent one would expect in relation to similar economies (OECD, 2011). Public debate in Chile started to acknowledge the content of this chart, and during recent years inequality became an unavoidable issue in public discussion and in different social and political agendas.

Figure 1.1 | Reduction of poverty, housing deficit and inequality in Chile, 1990-2009



Source: Author based on: Chart 1: Ministerio de Desarrollo Social (2013); Chart 2: Datavoz (2009); Chart 3: World Bank (n.d.)

With these three curves in mind I started a research that systematically moved away from these charts and went closer to the territory, with fewer indices and more personal stories, fewer numbers and more emotions, more politics, more territorial and spatial dynamics, aware of the impossibility of capturing the experiences, emotionality and lived consequences of inequalities in mere numbers. The initial question remains the same:

what is the role that housing policies have in bringing about social justice and reducing inequalities through the production of cities? Or, in simpler words, this research seeks to understand how housing policies can contribute to decreasing urban inequalities. My initial curiosity about the notion of inequality and the role of housing in reducing it led to a research approach that has attempted to explore the lived inequalities rather than their measurement, looking for the impact that housing polices might have on them.

In order to achieve this, this research has two fundamental parts. The first is a deep discussion about the role of social policies, the nature of inequalities and housing policies, and the different manifestations of urban inequalities. The main product of this discussion is a framework that provides a series of lenses through which to understand housing from various perspectives in order to tackle inequalities. The second part consists of empirical work undertaken in a case study in Chile, in order to explore the materialisation and spatialisation of such discourses and issues, and to identify the main challenges and obstacles that current housing policies are facing in Chile and Latin America in becoming more comprehensive and in tackling multiple inequalities.

It is important to introduce here an idea that will be further discussed in the following chapter, namely the increasing acknowledgement since the early 1990s of poverty as a complex and multidimensional phenomenon (see Moser, 1995; Wratten, 1995), not fully captured by quantitative and mono-sectoral approaches. This research argues that, as the reduction of poverty starts to involve aspects of redistribution and recognition, current social policies focusing on the reduction of poverty cannot achieve such a goal without addressing issues of quantitative and qualitative redistribution. In addressing these multidimensional issues, the object of the policies moves away from poverty alleviation towards aspects of inequality reduction and social justice, requiring therefore a different set of approaches and criteria: failing to deal with redistribution will inevitably end in failing to reduce poverty in its current and more complex sense.

This research is based on questions that have their roots in intellectual and emotional concerns, grounded in my own political trajectory and position. It is based on the acknowledgement of injustices, the desire for change, and the hope that new forms of

solidarity can materialise in alternative social arrangements. It is based on the desire and hope that the rage against inequalities, as a political affect, can be utilised towards action and transformation.

As described by Gautam Bhan (2014), configurations of inequality take particular forms at particular times in particular spaces, and each of these configurations of inequality requires a new solidarity to work as resistance. The goal of this research is to explore these configurations of inequalities, and to understand the role that housing policies can play in transforming them, identifying the main obstacles that today are preventing housing production from tackling them. And in order to understand these configurations, the research explores the lived inequalities in the territory, their experience, their manifestation in urban space and relationships, and particularly the consequences of housing policies and institutional arrangements for them.

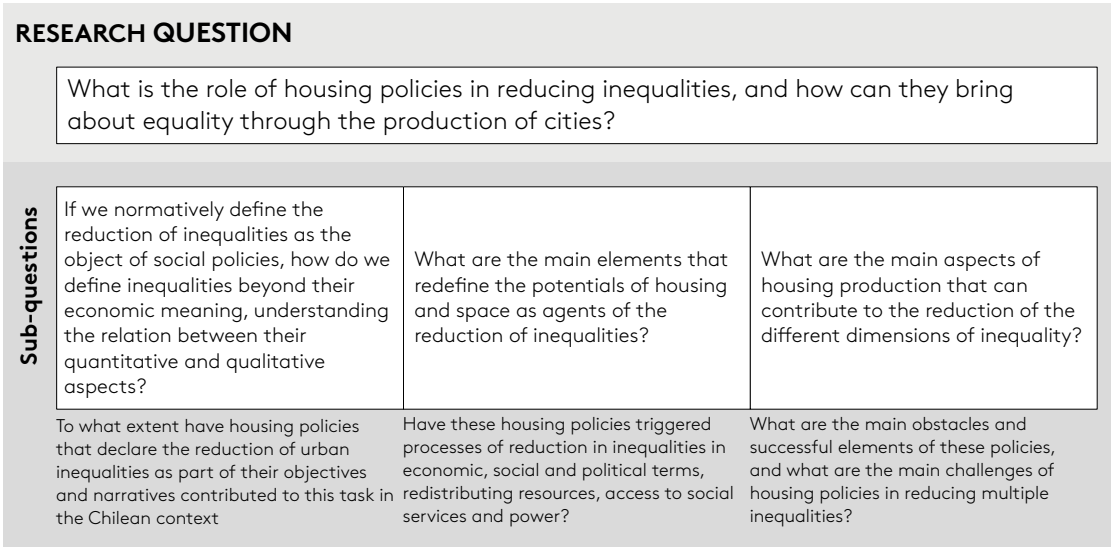
This introductory chapter has a series of proposals. Firstly, the next section presents the main elements that constitute the research, namely the questions, the argument and an introduction to the expected contributions of this work. Then it presents what I have called an emotional discussion about the normative positions of this research, based on my own positionality and the work and ideas of a series of authors (Ahmed, 2004; Lechner, 2002, 2006; Protevi, 2009). This discussion reflects on the motivations for conducting this research from a personal and political perspective. This section also discusses the scope and potential contributions of this work in the field of urbanism, in the recognition of the potential of political intensities in understanding housing production and the city, and their translation into political and policy challenges. And in its final section this chapter introduces the structure of the whole thesis, presenting a brief description of the content of each of the chapters.

1.1 Question, argument and what to expect from this thesis

As already stated, the main question that this research is pursing is what the role of housing policies is in reducing inequalities, and how they can bring about equality

through the production of cities. This main question is articulated by a series of sub-questions summarised in Figure 1.2. The main argument that this research proposes is that housing policies can play a role in reducing inequalities, but to do so housing must be conceived *as urbanism*, as a process multiple in nature and scale, and inequalities need to be understood in their complexities and diverse aspects.

Figure 1.2 | Research question and sub-questions



Source: Author

Three sub-questions touch aspects of housing, inequality and the city: firstly, understanding how to define inequalities beyond their economic meaning, understanding the relation between the quantitative and qualitative aspects of them; secondly, what the main elements that redefine the potentials of housing and space as agents of inequalities' reduction are; and thirdly, what the main aspects of housing production that can contribute to the reduction of the different dimensions of inequality are. These questions are discussed theoretically in Chapter 2. In addressing these questions this research elaborates some theoretical reflections that conclude with a framework that allows conceptualising *housing as urbanism* and bridging housing and inequalities.

These sub-questions are then elaborated in the Chilean context of housing production. The way in which they are explored is through specific enquires: firstly, to understand to what extent housing policies that have declared the reduction of urban inequalities as part

of their objectives and narratives have contributed to this task in the Chilean context; secondly, to determine if these housing policies have triggered processes of reduction in inequalities in economic, social and political terms, redistributing resources, access to rights and services, and power respectively; and thirdly, to explore what are the main obstacles and successful elements of these policies, in order to discuss what are the main challenges of current housing policies in reducing multiple inequalities.

The reasons why this framework is applied to Chile are widely discussed in Chapter 4, but can be summarised as follows: Firstly, there is the context of high inequality. Even if some indices show that inequality rates have slightly decreased over the last years, it is still very minimal and it is important to pay attention to the qualitative aspects of it in order to consolidate this trend. Secondly, housing policies have focused historically on quantitative and financial aspect of housing provision, but during the last decade there has been a shift towards quality aspects, with a new generation of policies that at least in their official narratives and objectives include urban equality. So it is worth asking if they are actually moving in that direction. And thirdly, the Chilean model has been seen as a successful reference in the Latin American context, given the quantitative achievements described earlier. Even if the qualitative consequences of this model have been widely questioned, they have usually been overlooked by policy makers, and because Chile was an early adaptor of privatised mechanisms of housing production, it is important to explore in a deeper way the relation between Chilean housing policies and urban inequality, thus enriching the regional discussion about housing production.

The specific area that this research looks at is Bajos de Mena (hereinafter, BdM), a peripheral territory in the district of Puente Alto, Santiago, inhabited by around 130,000 people who came to the area mainly through massive social housing projects built over the last 25 years, with high levels of density and physical degradation, lack of public spaces and public services, very poor connectivity with the rest of the city, and high levels of violence and stigmatisation. As a paradigmatic example of the housing policies of recent decades, it has also been a territory in which most of the new generation of policies that look for urban equality have been put into practice as a *guinea pig*, and it therefore

represents a good realm in which to explore the different trends of public action regarding housing.

BdM is an emblematic area, not just because of its size and the number of public interventions it has faced in recent years, but because its landscape, architecture, urban structure, location, violence, political networks and shortcomings as well as the everyday experience of inhabiting BdM, are probably the most accurate physical manifestation of inequalities one can encounter. It is a collection of places, histories, and life trajectories that concentrate most of the materiality that is the fuel of this research: socio-spatial realities that consolidate and reproduce inequalities, in which the city is not just a background but a motor for them. The pain and rage triggered by the existence of a territory like BdM in Santiago is, as will be explored in the next section, at the core of the motivation behind this research.

The materiality of lived inequalities was experienced by researching this area through being involved in the life and perceptions of the government officials working in the area, its community leaders (hereinafter, *dirigentes*) and its residents. Such immersion contributed immeasurably to the understanding of inequalities and the impact of housing policies on them. This materiality is also what triggered the sense of urgency, the anger and the consequent desire for change that are at the base of the search for new spaces of solidarity arising from the urban field.

Empirical work was conducted in BdM to analyse the effects of two programmes that are part of a new generation of housing policies, namely housing programmes implemented after the new National Housing Policy of 2006 that adopted a renewed narrative in which qualitative aspects and urban equality were supposed to have a key position. The two programmes are first a basic housing construction scheme, *Fondo Solidario de Elección de Vivienda DS49* (Solidary found for housing choice; hereinafter, DS49), and second a programme of demolishing and reconversion of neighbourhoods called *Programa de Regeneración de Condominios Sociales - Segunda Oportunidad*, (Programme of regeneration of Social Condos; hereinafter, Second Opportunity). Two other programmes were used as background cases to reach further conclusions, and to discuss

the limited understanding of housing policies as restricted exclusively to the provision of housing units, overlooking infrastructure and other urban public goods. These two additional programmes are first, a programme of public spaces recovery *Programa Quiero mi Barrio* (Programme 'I love my neighbourhood'; hereinafter, PQMB), and second, an Integral Plan taking place in the area that seeks to coordinate all the actions in the territory.

The analysis of these interventions was based on the definition of three categories presented in the theoretical discussion: defining housing as an economic, social and political device, the research seeking to explore spaces in which housing has acted as a productivity trigger and an asset (tackling economic inequalities); as a platform to the city at multiple scales (tackling social inequalities); and as a collective and multidimensional process (tackling political inequalities). Each of these categories is used as a lens, and a mix of interviews and secondary data helps us to understand to what extent each of the programmes perceives housing from these multiples perspectives, and therefore contributes to reducing quantitative and qualitative inequalities.

The conclusions and preliminary contributions of the research include a series of elements. Firstly it proposes a more complex understanding of housing policies, in which the notions of land, process and scale play a key role, challenging the limited Chilean voucher system and its consequences regarding inequality in the territory, and proposing that the role of urbanism lies precisely in coordinating efforts and policies working at different urban scales. This element also aims to contribute to a regional discussion about housing production and voucher-based policies in Latin America. Secondly, it proposes the definition of a series of key aspects that redefine the understanding of qualitative and quantitative urban inequality. Thirdly, it presents a deeper understanding of a complex territory such as BdM, in which the state has been present but unable to decrease injustices over the years, even consolidating dynamics of abuse. Fourthly, it identifies a series of obstacles that are preventing housing policies from acting as truly transformative tools towards the reduction of inequalities, summarised in five elements: (1) institutional order, sectoral agendas, fragmentation and targeting; (2) individual choices vs. collective processes; (3) clientelism and dependency; (4) design as a transformative tool; and (5)

the problem of scale – land policy and citywide processes. And finally, by discussing the idea of *housing as urbanism* this research also attempts to contribute to the (always under construction) discipline of urbanism. In particular, by establishing new and stronger links between housing, the city and inequality, this research seeks to open up space for new solidarities within the urban scale, that can emerge out of the recognition of the potential for political and emotional intensities in understanding housing and the city, and their translation into political and policy challenges.

1.2 An emotional discussion about the normative positions of this research

This research is based on a series of normative positions, and discussing these positions from the very beginning is necessary in order to ensure conceptual and methodological rigour. So both the theoretical and methodological discussions provide important space for this. This introduction section, however, provides a discussion from an emotional and political point of view about the central position that these normative definitions have in this work.

The main normative position of the research relates to the fact that it does not try to answer the question about *what the role of social policies is*. It rather proposes an answer for this question beforehand, as a starting point for the rest of the thesis development. This research starts by saying that the role of social policies such as housing, the object of the policies, *should be* the reduction of inequalities. This position is already a working hypothesis, as it assumes that housing policies *could* do something. And it is from this standpoint that the conceptual and empirical analysis is constructed.

Even if there are empirical, historical and contextual reasons that can sustain the definition of inequality as the object of social policies, and this will be discussed further in the following chapters, this section tries to stress the point that this is also (and probably mainly) a normative, political and emotional definition. Rather than trying to

escape from my multiple bias, this research tries to make the bias explicit. As Alain de Botton spells out:

> Yes we should perhaps be more generous towards bias. In its pure form, a bias simply indicates a method of evaluating events that is guided by a coherent underlying thesis about human functioning and flourishing. It is a pair of lenses that slide over reality and aim to bring it more clearly into focus (de Botton, 2014:29).

The construction of such a *pair of lenses*, I want to argue, is a normative process related to political and emotional constructions that are discussed in this section. There is a series of reasons why the definition of the object of social policy such as housing policies is always normative. Public policies are always based on normative definitions, even if these definitions are hidden under labels that present them as *neutral* or purely *technical.* Defining the role that a public policy *should have* implies defining the kind of social order it is proposing and the relationship between individuals and institutions that it envisions. It therefore involves an ideological (and then, political and normative) definition of that ideal social order. Social theory is a cultural product (Lechner, 2002), and as such it is impregnated by cultural and collective experiences, desires and social subjectivities that inform such construction.

In her book '*The Cultural Politics of Emotion'* the feminist Sara Ahmed reflects on what she calls the 'sociality of emotion', referring to the idea that "emotions are not 'in' either the individual or the social, but produce the very surfaces and boundaries that allow the individual and the social to be delineated as if they are objects" (Ahmed, 2004:10). Thus she criticises on the one hand a social structure that neglects emotional intensities, and on the other the privatisation of emotions.

These two aspects of emotions highlighted by Ahmed are at the core of what this section seeks to discuss: firstly, the importance for the construction of knowledge of not neglecting emotions, and secondly, the political dimension of emotions, and the importance of not circumscribing them exclusively as a private matter.

The equivocal idea that knowledge production always has a rational root irreconcilable with emotions has been largely challenged by feminist theories, as Ahmed unfolds:

> The response to the dismissal of feminists as emotional should not then be to claim that feminism is rational rather than emotional. Such a claim would be misguided as it would accept the very opposition between emotions and rational thought that is crucial to the subordination of femininity as well as feminism (Ahmed, 2004:170).

Feminists and theories of identity politics are not the only ones that have challenged the opposition between rational and emotional thought. Cognitive science and philosophy have also contested the idea of human beings as univocal rational cognitive subjects. As explained by Protevi:

> A central strand in the philosophy of mind has built up a picture of cognition as the emotionless capture and processing of information, that is, as representation. Today, however, some of the most interesting work in the field focuses on the role of emotion in cognition and/or challenges the notion of representation as the key factor in our knowing the world (Protevi, 2009:xi).

Then, in defining the normative position that this research stands for (that housing policies should promote reduction of inequalities), there is an attempt not to neglect emotions, and naming them plays a central role. There is an affective cognition behind the questions presented, as well as in the process of looking for answers. How to dismiss the pain that confronting desolated landscapes and life stories triggers? How to avoid the anger produced by the 'sardine urbanism' when it is encountered as the rule rather than the exception? Such urbanism was described by the writer Pedro Lemebel so bluntly as one that "was planned to accentuate life's madness through mere human life accumulation, self-referential violence, by those at the margins in the allotment of urban space" (Lemebel, 1995).

These emotions, which are an essential part of the core material that explains my interest and curiosity in this research, are not just private and not just personal, as they are a constitutive part of the borders between the individual and the social, and therefore, of political concerns. This links to the second aspect related to the role of emotions, the fact

that emotions have a role in the politicisation of subjects, in the construction of the social, and should not be misrepresented as exclusively private.

John Protevi's work has introduced the three concepts of *bodies politic*, *political cognition*, and *political affect*, stressing that we actively make sense of situations through significations and values, and that "this cognition is co-constituted with affective openness to that situation" (2009:xiv). These terms are relevant to this discussion as they provide a conceptual approach to the linkages between individual emotions and the production of knowledge and cognition, as well as the construction of collective political sense:

> In acknowledging that collective political categories are those by which individual bodies politic cognize situations, we come upon the notion of political affect. In order to make sense of the world by establishing significance and assuming an orientation, we must first open to the world, to the things, to the others. We must be able to be affected by the world in sensibility, the first meaning of "sense". (…) Thus, in the notion of political affect I stress the historically and socially embedded aspects of affective cognition (Protevi, 2009:35).

This relationship between politics and emotions conceptualised as political affect by Protevi, or Ahmed's understanding of emotions as the surfaces that allow the interaction between the individual and the social, can be explored by personal trajectories that open up such a link. This research has attempted to build and explore such a journey.

The Chilean-German political scientist Norbert Lechner describes in his work his own transition in understanding how feelings and emotions are something that is not bounded and constrained to the private ambit: "It was very late that I discovered how linked were my inquiries about politics to my personal life (…) I learn, even if it is through intuitive means, that the question about the social order is not just an institutional or structural problem. It involves, above all, the emotions, beliefs and images with which we orientate our everyday life" (Lechner, 2002:7). Lechner uses this lens to explore the notions of social subjectivities and the subjective dimension of politics. In his words, "if we understand politics as that which I once called 'the conflictive and never finished construction of the desired order', social subjectivity offers the motivations that

feed that process of construction (…) Claiming the constructive character of modern politics is necessary in an era that tends to the 'naturalisation of the social'" (Lechner, 2002:8). These meaningful reflections of Lechner put emotions at the core of the construction of the social and the political, and reveal the importance of engaging with emotions as a way of questioning the naturalisation of the social as a given, as if it was not built upon normative visions; and also, as a way of promoting new possibilities of social and political agreements, that will give account of their normative (and therefore emotional, social and political) positions.

The anger and pain triggered by inequalities are key emotions to the construction of this research, but they are not enough to explain the completeness of its normative definitions. The notion that social policies *should have* a particular object (the reduction of inequalities) is supported by the de-naturalisation of existing agreements, and the envisioning of an alternative social order, different from the existing ones, and other possible forms of solidarity able to respond to the realities that generate the frustrations described. And the possibility of that envisioning requires more than anger and pain. As discussed by Ahmed, transformation cannot be led just by the 'anti'. Sure, it is anger that gives the political sense of urgency, and 'being against something' is what might open up the future, but there is a different set of emotions necessary to build those alternatives: pain, anger, love, wonder, joy, empathy and also hope. The hope is what "guides every moment of refusal and that structures the desire for change with the trembling that comes from an opening up of the future, as an opening up of what is possible" (Ahmed, 2004:171).

This research is built upon hope, and through the investigation it always presents a mix of efforts to understand the current social, cultural, institutional and spatial arrangements, and also to identify the way they can be challenged in order to lead towards different arrangements, the cracks in which inequalities and the multiplicity of aspects that they involve can be reduced. This is also why in producing the content of this thesis there is more than numbers, indices and statistics. Yes, there is important quantitative data that helps us to understand the reality studied and to address the questions presented, and that information is taken very seriously and not dismissed. But

there are also personal stories, images, literature and reflections derived from a range of sources that contribute to unpacking the materiality of rage and desires.

This desire is what makes this research deeply normative. This normativity does not mean less rigour, as it examines the reality with carefulness and precision, but without neglecting the emotions underneath it, acknowledging that there are intellectual and political hopes behind it. And this is also what explains that the analysis is always conducted towards finding cracks, challenges and obstacles, projecting current realities to open up possible futures, and identifying ways in which institutions and social policies can be transformed to embrace new forms of solidarity and social orders.

And for this research, these political hopes are deposited in housing and housing policies. They are based on the belief that our home, our houses, the space where we wake up every morning and start our lives every day, the most expensive and durable good owned by most people, has something to do with inequalities. So housing, as a spatial body, can play a role as an economic, social and political device that goes beyond our individual paths. From the publication of *The Housing Question* by Friedrich Engels in 1872, to the most recent book by Peter Marcuse and David Madden, *In Defense of Housing,* in 2016, the question about housing as a political-economic problem has been central to the debate about the city. As Madden and Marcuse point out, "for the oppressed, housing is always in crisis" (2016:10), and therefore exploring the potential of housing as a tool for transformation is always urgent.

The potential contributions of this research, therefore, are both theoretical and practical. From a conceptual point of view, it provides an approach to housing policies and inequality that redefines the understanding of qualitative and quantitative urban inequalities and their relation to housing production, helping to reshape a more comprehensive definition of the role of housing policies. Also, it presents an analytical description of a territory as complex as BdM, an area of the city that has been studied before and has faced wide exposition, but that has been the target of over-simplifications and stigmatisation, with descriptions that usually find comfort in analysing it from generalised data and dramatic characterisation. This research has attempted not to

dismiss the multiplicities of lived inequalities displayed in the territory, presenting this without discharging the anger and pain it can produce, but avoiding oversimplifications through the incorporation of various voices and emotions for its portrayal. And finally, related to the normative standpoint discussed, this research identifies concrete institutional and social obstacles that are preventing housing policies from working to reduce inequalities. In recognising these challenges, this research is positioning itself as a tool for the desire of change, aiming to contribute to the design of alternative futures, and to discuss the possibilities of the discipline of urbanism opening up new solidarities emerging out of the recognition of the political, emotional and multidimensional intensities of the materiality and spatial manifestations of lived inequalities.

1.3 Structure of the work

This thesis is structured in nine chapters, each of them combining descriptive and analytical elements. It is organised in a way that seeks to provide a journey through the research process, trying to capture the multiple aspects and moments it encompassed, from theoretical and conceptual enquiries, methodological definitions, historical and contextual research, through the impact and weight of reality during the fieldwork, to the more reflective and prospective aspects towards the end. While the first three chapters (introduction, theory and methodology) are founded mainly on discussions based on a literature review and theoretical reflections, from Chapter 4 onwards they combine information derived from the fieldwork and secondary data with theory and analytical reflections.

While this introductory chapter presents the initial curiosities that triggered this research and an understanding of what to expect from it, Chapter 2 focuses on providing the theoretical material for the discussion. Using theories from a series of authors mainly on inequality, housing, and urban geography, this theoretical chapter starts by discussing the normative definitions regarding why I have chosen to work with housing policies and inequality, and then focuses mainly on three conceptual discussions. Firstly, it defines a series of aspects that constitute urban inequalities, exploring the notions of quantitative

and qualitative inequalities, understanding that while fighting the former is essential to trigger redistribution, the latter has the potential to sustain a reduction in inequalities over time, and investigating the economic, social and political nature of inequalities. Secondly, it presents a discussion about the role of space and the city as a project, discussing the tension between spatial processes and outcomes in the construction of that project. And thirdly, it offers a debate about the potentials of housing *as urbanism*, as a city builder that should be regarded both as a right and a complex land market, as a process of multiple scales, and that is defined as both an object and a multidimensional process.

The chapter concludes by proposing a series of lenses of analysis derived from the theoretical discussion, suggesting that housing can participate in the process of reducing urban inequalities if it is understood (1) in its potentials as a productivity trigger and an asset for families, facing economic inequalities; (2) as a platform to the city at multiple scales, facing social inequalities; and (3) in its capacity to be a multidimensional process, generating collective capabilities and redistribution of power, then facing political inequalities.

With these lenses, the methodological discussion is presented in Chapter 3, introducing the research design and the specific methods used to collect and analyse data for the three defined spheres: housing as a device to reduce economic, social and political inequalities. Also, it addresses some general questions about the methodological standpoint: What kind of research design, intellectual approach and methodological worldview is proposed? What are the methodological challenges and limitations of the proposed research, based on its position and scope? There is an important discussion about the fact that this research works with normative positions, discussing an approach based on value-rational questions, working with arguments rather than hypotheses, focusing on values and placing power at the core of the analysis. Finally, it discusses the challenges of researching reductions in inequalities in a context of housing policies known for overlooking qualitative aspects.

Chapter 4 provides the institutional and historical context in which this research took place. Beyond the descriptive aspects, it seeks to provide some reflections on why it is relevant and pertinent to research the relationship between housing policies and inequalities in the Chilean context. This chapter discusses the history of inequalities in the country, the role of the state, and the history of housing policies. For both topics, it emphasises the importance of understanding why the current context is pertinent to this study.

The territorial context is provided in Chapter 5, which describes the history and unpacks aspects of life in BdM. Even if this chapter could be considered as contextual, it presents the idea of lived inequalities from an analytical standpoint, exploring how they are displayed in the territory of BdM, and understanding how the notion of being a *guinea pig* for housing policies has affected them. Following a historical description with a focus on emblematic areas of BdM, the chapter uses the spheres defined in the theoretical chapter to explore the inhabited inequalities and life displayed in BdM from three perspectives: livelihoods and practices against economic inequalities; household structure, violence, and the display of social inequalities; and political clientelism and assistance networks as barriers for political inequality.

Chapter 6 and 7 present a detailed discussion of the two programmes researched. First, Chapter 6 introduces an analytical description of the two case studies conducted, both located in the area of BdM. The two programmes studied are the Basic Housing Programme DS49 and the Second Opportunity. For each of these, this chapter presents the background of the programmes and the way in which they were implemented specifically in BdM, in the neighbourhoods of Jesús de Nazaret (DS49), and Cerro Morado and Francisco Coloane (Second Opportunity). This description inevitably touches part of the wider and more complex reality and history of BdM.

Following this description, Chapter 7 discusses the impacts of the DS49 and Second Opportunity, through their implementations in BdM. Using the theoretical lenses proposed, the chapter uses different sources, secondary data, observations and interviews to look at the impacts of the policies in terms of: *economic inequalities* (are these policies

contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a productivity trigger and an asset?); *social inequalities* (are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a platform to the city at multiple scales?); and *political inequalities* (are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a collective multidimensional process?). For each of these three aspects, there is an institutional and territorial analysis.

The chapter concludes by discussing what are the common obstacles and successes for the different dimensions researched, proposing five critical aspects: (1) institutional order, sectoral agendas, fragmentation and targeting; (2) individual choices vs. collective processes; (3) clientelism and dependency; (4) design as a transformative tool; and (5) the problem of scale, land policy and citywide processes. While some of these aspects were part of the intuited elements from the beginning of the study, some others appeared as unexpected findings during the research, and therefore required some extra reflection. This is particularly the case for the issues related to clientelism and dependency, which were encountered as an unavoidable issue in the field, and grew to be some of the most interesting political findings of this research, deeply transforming my perception of the spatial, economic, social and political configurations of the territory.

Finally, Chapter 8 begins to wrap up the analysis that is concluded with the final considerations in Chapter 9. What Chapter 8 presents are two cases that were in principle conceptualised as *background cases*, given that they are not considered by the official bodies as *housing* programmes: the PQMB and Integral Plan, which address issues of public space and integrated urban interventions respectively. However, in researching how these two programmes handle the different issues discussed, it became evident that to understand *housing as urbanism* and address urban inequalities, the limited understanding of housing policies as those committed exclusively to the provision of housing units, overlooking infrastructure and other urban public goods, is not enough. So these cases, that are officially seen as non-housing programmes, actually incorporate some of the necessary elements to complement the discussion about housing in its multidimensional nature, exploring the institutional efforts that they are making to address some of the issues identified in Chapter 7 as the main obstacles of current housing policies. Chapter 8 and 9 are framed by the idea of hope discussed in the

previous section, in enquiring how these programmes are developing institutional and territorial arrangements that might be seeds to open up other possible futures.

Final comments

As the chapter title suggests, this introduction seeks to provide information about how I came to develop this research, and what to expect from this work. It does not provide a deep discussion about the theoretical debates, the methodological definition, or a profound description of the territory and cases researched, as this will be further developed in the following chapters. Rather, it presents a discussion about the very bases of this research: its motivations, standpoints and political core, which directly inform the journey of this investigation, from beginning to end. It introduces the idea of a journey, as I see the development of this thesis as a path that exceeds the timeframe of this research, starting much earlier with my own political and professional engagement with inequalities and housing in the Chilean territory, a journey not without anger and frustration, and that during the time of this research has been altered, mutated, and re-ordered through my encounters with new ideas, places and people.

The challenge of urbanism, understood as a spatial discipline, can be defined as "how to address the encounter and coexistence of different and often contradictory logics of city-making" (Fiori and Brandão, 2010:190). In a sense, this (enjoyable) journey has pursued a disciplinary contribution to this enormous challenge, with special emphasis on how housing can be reframed as urbanism, searching for new spaces of solidarity within it. Asking about the role of housing policies in reducing inequalities should be seen as a profoundly political question, as it is based on the belief that any enquiry about the social policies and the city at any scale should embrace such a condition.

Before closing this chapter, I would like to return to Sara Ahmed's work once again, to reflect on the relation between politics and emotions, particularly hope:

> Politics without hope is impossible, and hope without politics is a reification of possibility (and becomes merely religious). Indeed, it is hope that makes involvement in direct forms of political activism enjoyable. (…) [H]ope involves

> a relationship to the present, and to the present as affected by its imperfect translation of the past (…) [H]ope is intentional and directed towards the future only in relation to an object that is faced in the present. Such hope is a form of investment, which assumes that an object, if achieved, will promise the fulfilment of the hope, and return our investment (Ahmed, 2004:184).

Following her reflection, "being hopeful may be necessary for something to stay possible, but it is not sufficient grounds for the determination of the future" (Ahmed, 2004:185). To achieve those desired futures there is a need for political work: to build hope, to make such an investment, requires identifying cracks, challenges, obstacles, and that is an intellectual and political task that, from my perspective, is worth undertaking. This work presents a journey based on the assumption that the task is necessary, because the only way to imagine these possible futures is by exploring the present and the past, understanding that a "plurality of memories shape a battlefield in which to fight for the sense of the present, in order to determine the materials with which to build the future" (Lechner, 2006:524). This work looks for these materials of the present to sew them with a collectively imagined future, one in which housing, the city, and the instruments that the state has for its production, can contribute to a more equal society

CHAPTER 2

Inequalities, the City and Housing as Urbanism: A Possible Framework

> The very term "housing policy" is evidence of a myth. (…)
> Housing policy is an ideological artefact, not a real category.
> It is an artificially clear picture of what the state actually does
> in myriad uncoordinated and at times contradictory ways
> (Madden and Marcuse, 2016:119).

Introduction

This research seeks to explore the role that housing policies have in bringing about social justice and reducing inequalities through the production of cities. In other words, in what ways (if any) can housing policies contribute to reducing urban inequalities? In order to build an argument capable of exploring these issues, this chapter presents a series of theoretical considerations and discussions, and ends up proposing a framework that will be used to analyse the case studies. The main argument that this research proposes is that housing policies can play a role in reducing various forms of inequalities, but to do so housing must be understood *as urbanism*, as a process multiple in nature and scale, which acts as a material, economic, social and political device.

As with any social policy, housing policies propose a certain relationship between individuals and institutions. In particular, housing policies construct that relationship in space and in the city. We inhabit an era that tends towards the misleading notion of the 'naturalisation of the social' (Lechner, 2002), in other words a strengthening of the feeling that the state of things is a natural condition rather than a social construction. In this context, this research is grounded on the very normative notion that, as social rather than natural constructions, the object of social policies can be challenged and redesigned. In particularly this research is grounded on the idea that the object of housing policies should be defined as the reduction of inequalities. These normative definitions are based on political subjectivities. As an aspiration, the reduction of inequalities lies at the core of

political subjectivities that seek to increase social justice, and the main challenges that they pose to the construction of the built environment remain an unsolved question. This chapter provides some theoretical categories and discussions for answering that question.

The chapter reviews a series of theoretical discussion in order to address these enquiries, and is organised as follows. The first section discusses the normative definitions of this research, and a series of points are made to define the theoretical justifications and lenses behind it. Then the second section presents the main conceptual debates, discussing the three theoretical categories used: inequalities; city and space production; and housing. Each of these topics is explored through different theoretical lenses, with the particular focus of building links between them. And finally, the third section of this chapter presents a framework of analysis, proposing a series of lenses to interrogate the extent to which housing policies can be conducive to tackling inequalities. Through discussing the definition and scope of housing, this chapter seeks to explore the main argument of this research, which is that housing policies can play a role in reducing inequalities, but to do so housing must be understood *as urbanism*, as a process multiple in nature and scale.

This framework will provide a series of understandings of housing in relation to space production and the reduction of inequalities that will then be used as lenses to explore the impacts of housing policies in the territory. These lenses or conceptual bridges, describe how housing and inequalities could be linked: housing defined as a *productivity trigger and an asset* for economic inequalities; housing understood as a *platform to the city at multiple scales* for social inequalities; and housing as *a multidimensional process* for political inequalities. In that sense, it recognises the triple condition of housing as an economic, social and political device, seeking to centre the reduction of inequalities in the discussion about urban and housing policies, but also to centre the potentials of housing policies in the discussion about the reduction of inequalities.

2.1 Normative definitions: Why inequalities and housing policies?

2.1.1 The object of Social Policies

To ensure the necessary conceptual and methodological rigour of this research, it is important to make explicit at the very beginning the assumptions and normative positions behind it. These assumptions relate particularly to the role of social policies such as housing in society, and to the definition of what can be called the *object* of the policies.

What is the primary goal of public policies? The analysis of public policies has been for decades a field of study for disciplines such as sociology, political science, economy, history and law, and their role and importance as instruments of governance and power have been studied from a historical perspective by key thinkers such as Max Weber and Michel Foucault. As described by Lascoumes and Le Galès (2014), since social science incorporated public policies as a field of study during the first half of the 20th century there have been many proposed definitions that involve questions of principles, objectives, instruments, laws, power, redistribution, regulations, practical actions, and institutionalisation. According to Lascoumes and Le Galès, "public policies are collective actions that participate in the creation of a political and social order, in the conduct of society, in the regulation of its tensions, and in conflict resolution" (2014:11).

In the context of this research, what is relevant is the fact that social policies are instruments that allow the state to act, and in doing so they suggest a specific role for individuals within society, proposing a relationship between individuals and institutions (King, 2003). As defined by Moran et al., ruling "is an assertion of the will, an attempt to exercise control, to shape the world. Public policies are instruments of this assertive ambition" (2008:3). Policies assume a specific power relationship between rulers and ruled, while offering an ideal form of society. In the case of housing policies, that relationship is qualified in space and in the city. Determining what the shape of a society *should be* is a political task, and therefore the definition of the *object* of policies that serve that task is given by normative positions and political subjectivities. To pretend that

there are no normative views in defining such a role would be misleading. The definition of the object of social policies therefore involves political (and collective) determinations. Then, not engaging with inequality is also a normative position, as it has been the case for most of the post Washington Consensus policies in Chile that have explicitly focus on economic growth, overlooking and even dismissing the importance of inequality reduction.

Defining the object of a social policy is not an obvious task, as it involves a definition of what a social policy *should be and do*, not just what it actually *is and does*. It requires defining its scope, and it then requires a dose of optimism, a projection of ideals towards a future in which the proposed social order is actually achieved, and in which public policies contribute to that trajectory. This optimism is what makes the task intellectually challenging: as the sociologist Erik Olin Wright asserts, "[p]essimism is intellectually easy, perhaps even intellectually lazy. It often reflects a simple extrapolation of past experience into the future" (2013:21). It requires above all a discussion about the ideological positions that sustain such definition, on why, for example, reduction of inequalities is defined as the desirable object of social policies, and particularly on why housing policies should be considered relevant for such a goal.

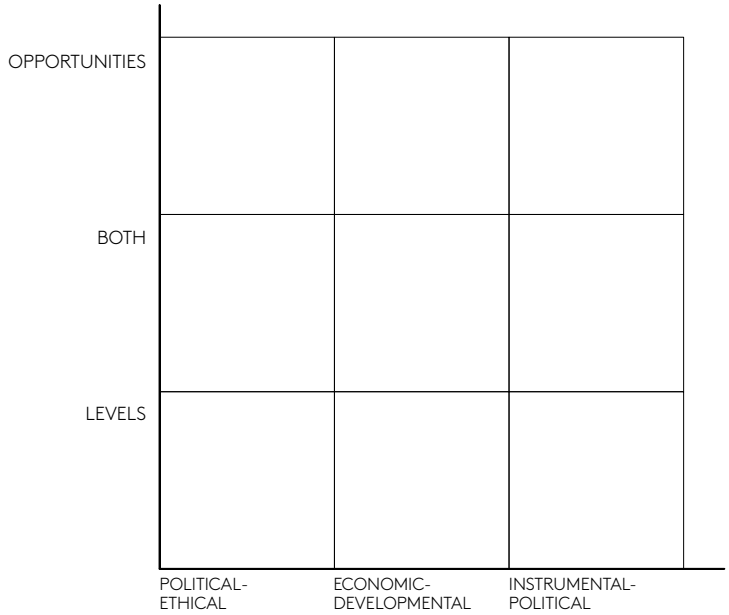
2.1.2 Why inequalities

In a presentation about *Equality*, the Chilean economist Oscar Landerretche introduced the topic by presenting a matrix with two axes (see Figure 2.1): one showing different definitions of equality, identified as equality of *opportunities*, of *levels* and of *both of them*; and the other showing the reasons why someone could be interested in the question of equality: because of an *instrumental-political* reason, an *economic-developmental* reason, or simply a *political-ethical* reason (Landerretche and Tironi, 2009).

As well as clarifying different approaches to equality, the diagram is interesting as it opens a conversation about *why* we should care about inequality and the different approaches to that concern. According to Landerretche, the political-ethical reason would be enough to set a normative position regarding the relevance of reduction of inequalities as an object for social policies, namely the desire to inhabit a world that is less unequal. Part of this

ethical position is what has been discussed so far in this thesis. This section, then, presents a series of reasons beyond the normative realm that put reduction of inequalities as a central feature of socio-spatial policies such as housing. One relates to historical trends and the relevance of social arrangement to determine redistribution. The other relates to the complicated relationship between inequality reduction and poverty alleviation. And finally it presents a discussion on wealth and income inequalities, and the particular space in which housing policies can become relevant for this debate.

Figure 2.1 | Matrix of definitions of Inequality and reasons to worry about it, by Oscar Landerretche



Source: Landerretche and Tironi, 2009:40

a. Why inequalities: Historical trends and the role of social arrangements

In historical terms there has been an increase of inequalities within and among countries over the last decades that make inequality a significant issue both globally and locally. Globalisation and the series of structural reforms conducted during the debt crisis in most developing economies, including countries like Chile as an early adaptor in the 1970s (Harvey, 2005), comprised a range of political and economic transformations, including processes of controlling the state's budget, privatisation of service provision and export sector rehabilitation (Mohan, 1996; Mkandawire, 2005). According to McGrew "whilst the relationship between globalization and world poverty is enormously

complicated, there is a general acknowledgment that globalization is strongly associated with an intensification of global inequality" (2000:353). Moreover, "from 1973 to 1993, inequality, however measured, increased between countries, within most countries and in the world as a whole" (UNHSP, 2003:36), and this is manifested by the fact that "rapid increases in national income are enjoyed less by low-income earners, and rapid decreases are felt more" (UNHSP, 2003:41).

It is not a coincidence that many major economists have focused their interest in recent years on inequality measurement and reduction, and that more than ever they have become relevant voices in public debate. Work over recent decades by authors such as the Nobel Prize-winning Joseph Stiglitz, Anthony Atkinson, Thomas Piketty and the Chilean economist José Gabriel Palma, has been particularly relevant in this process. The last century has shown that there is no clear relationship between stages of development and levels of inequality. In other words, there is an acknowledgement that developing economies are not synonymous with decreasing inequalities. This has been clearly exposed by Piketty's most recent and substantial work, which shows, through an exhaustive historical analysis, how economic growth can benefit some groups while harming others, without reducing inequality as a spontaneous consequence. In Piketty's words, "[t]he history of inequality is shaped by the way economic, social and political actors view what is just and what is not, as well as by the relative power of those actors and the collective choices that result" (Piketty, 2014:20). In other words, he highlights the importance of the "interaction between beliefs systems, institutions, and the dynamics of inequality… (as) the history of the distribution of wealth has always been deeply political, and it cannot be reduced to purely economic mechanisms" (Piketty, 2015:68-69). Inequality is also central in relation to issues of economic growth, as explained by Joseph Stiglitz (2013a), who argues that in the context of a crisis it is necessary to address the underlying problem of inequality in order to restore growth.

As described by many researchers, inequality and economic concentration are among the problems that are impossible to tackle without strong state intervention, and social policies are definitely part of the instrument that states can use to intervene in society. Following Piketty's exhaustive historical analysis of capital and inequality, probably one

of his main conceptual conclusions relates to the fact that institutions and beliefs systems are key to the distribution of income and wealth. In his words: "[i]nstitutional changes and political shocks –which can be viewed as largely endogenous to the inequality and development process itself– played a major role in the past, and will probably continue to do so in the future" (Piketty, 2015:67). He goes even further, proposing that it is such institutional arrangements that unquestionably determine the path of inequality trends, rather than it being a deterministic process:

> There are powerful forces pushing alternatively in the direction of rising or shrinking inequality. Which one dominates depends on the institutions and policies that societies choose to adopt (Piketty and Saez, 2014:842-843).

This assumption implies enormous challenges for the state in addressing actions towards improving redistribution. On the one hand, states have the capacity to use transfers and taxes for the reduction of inequality from market income to disposable income (Joumard et al., 2012). On the other, it implies the need for a responsibility in the use of social, economic and sectoral policies in general to trigger processes of socioeconomic and political transformation able to challenge unequal patterns of distribution in different fields. Despite the general acknowledgement of this issue, individual attempts to achieve a better distribution of wealth in developing countries have failed in scaling-up their effects: the redistributive whole has been less than the sum of individual measures (Griffin and James, 1981).

b. Why inequalities: The complicated relationship between inequality and poverty

In addition to the historic evidence that positions inequality as an important global and local issue, another reason to discuss reduction in inequality as the main object of social policies relates to the complicated interrelation between poverty alleviation and inequality. For decades, housing policies, as with many public policies, have been conceived as socioeconomic instruments with massive implications in terms of economic activity – in the case of housing, this is particularly relevant given the volume of the construction industry – and as a key tool for poverty alleviation (Ramírez, 2002). Over recent decades, however, the concept of poverty has been contested and redefined, as

challenges related to poverty have become more complex and multiple.

Then there has been a series of shifts towards more complex and multidimensional approaches in defining poverty, not just incorporating various social indicators, but also embracing aspects of vulnerability and entitlement as part of a cross-sectoral approach (Moser, 1995; Wratten, 1995). This transformation in the conception of poverty has also affected the ways in which it is measured. In the case of Chile, multiple variables beyond income have been incorporated in official statistics (Berner Herrera, 2014), acknowledging the heterogeneous nature of urban poor families (Salcedo and Rasse, 2012), and the change in the nature and manifestations of poverty that have taken place as a consequence of, for example, access to credit (Han, 2012).

The shift has also focused on the differences between absolute and relative definitions of poverty. While absolute poverty is defined in fixed terms, people are considered poor in relative terms if they cannot obtain "the conditions of life – that is the diets, amenities, standards and services – which allow them to play the roles, participate in the relationships and follow the customary behaviour which is expected of them by virtue of their membership of society" (Townsend, in Wratten, 1995:14). Relative definitions of poverty are inevitably related to questions of inequality.

As the evolution of ideas about poverty and their translation into policies have moved away from more quantitative and mono-sectoral approaches, the reduction of poverty starts to involve aspects of redistribution and recognition that are at the core of the reduction of inequality. As the next section will discuss, there has also been a radical evolution in ideas about inequality and social justice, at least from Rawls (1971) concept of *primary social goods* onwards, incorporating more complex and multiple dimensions to its understanding. This movement towards multidimensional approaches has contributed to the convergence of the inequality and poverty debates. In other words, we want to argue here that nowadays policies focusing on the reduction of poverty, without addressing issues of quantitative and qualitative redistribution, cannot reduce poverty. And in addressing these issues, the object of the policies that have been historically seen as tools for poverty alleviation, moves towards aspects of inequality reduction and social

justice, requiring therefore a different set of approaches and criteria. Failing to deal with redistribution issues will inevitably end in failing to reduce poverty in its current and more complex sense.

c. Why inequalities: Wealth and income inequalities and the role of housing

The discussion about inequality has historically been led mainly by economists, as some of them have done considerable work on the measurement of economic inequalities, and this has given the issue an important place in public debate. There is a final issue singled out by this economist-led discussion that is worth considering in the normative definition of the reduction of inequalities as the object of housing policies: the differentiation between inequalities in wealth and income.

Thomas Piketty has possibly been the person who has put together the most consistent body of data analysis about the history of income and wealth distribution. One of the many key issues highlighted by his work is the differences and causes of wealth inequality on one hand, and income inequality on the other. According to Piketty, one of the tasks of his latest book was to "distinguish between the inequality of labor income and the inequality of capital ownership. Of course these two dimensions of inequality do interact in important ways (…) But the forces that drive income inequality and wealth inequality are largely different" (Piketty, 2015:72). This distinction becomes particularly relevant in traditional patrimonial societies, in which the top shares of income and wealth tend to be less correlated, and social hierarchies contribute to raising wealth rather than to income inequality. In countries like Chile, this is particularly clear as capital property tends to be much more concentrated than in other countries, and traditional estimates of inequality significantly underestimate the share of the richest 1% (López et al., 2013).

This distinction between income and wealth inequality is relevant for this research as houses are often the primary economic assets held during the lives of most of the population of developing countries like Chile, and probably the main capital good to which families have access. As Aalbers and Christophers point out:

> In many capitalist societies residential property is the largest individual wealth/asset. (…) As such, it is in housing that the vast wealth inequalities of

> capitalist societies, which we hear so much about today, are often most visible and most material (2014:380).

Housing is the most relevant asset in terms of wealth disposal for most families, particularly for the poorest, in contexts like Chile where the volume of home ownership is especially high, as will be discussed later. As wealth seems to be even more relevant and dramatic than income in terms of economic inequalities, housing becomes a key instrument for the redistribution of capital and the challenges related to the reduction of inequalities. This is not to dismiss the importance of labour and other social systems in reducing inequalities, but to give emphasis to less obvious sources of inequality linked to the distribution of wealth, for example access to adequate housing.

In their attempt to understand how housing is implicated in the political economy, Aalbers and Christophers (2014) argue that the link occurs because of the ways in which housing production interacts with capital in its three primary forms: as circulation, as social relation and as ideology: "as private property ownership, market allocation mechanisms and accumulation strategies are decisively privileged (by capitalist ideology)" (2014:384). In the same way, Madden and Marcuse point out that "homeownership patterns are both expressions and instruments of inequality. Increasing homeownership without ending inequality is not a route to ending alienation. It will just lead to more debt and more insecurity" (2016:81).

"No other commodity is as important for organizing citizenship, work, identities, solidarities and politics", say Madden and Marcuse (2016:12) when referring to housing. As inequality has become one of the main drawbacks of capital ideology (Piketty, 2014, 2015) the bonds described above reinforce the necessity of studying the ways in which housing policies can contribute to tackling one of the main political and socioeconomic downsides of current social order: inequalities in their multiple natures.

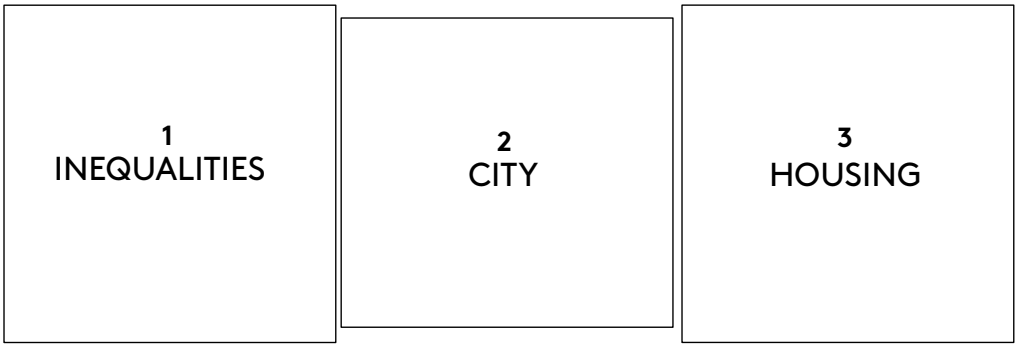
This section has presented a series of issues that explain the relevance of researching housing policies in relation to the reduction of inequalities. The different points singled out here seek to support the definition of the reduction of inequalities as the object of

housing policies: the historical relevance of inequality; the relationship between poverty and inequality; and the relationship between wealth and income inequality and the relevance of housing to this. As has been said, this is also a normative definition that responds to particular political subjectivities, but that does not mean there are no strong reasons behind such a definition, for example those discussed above.

2.2 Conceptual discussions: Inequalities, cities and housing

This research is built upon a series of concepts that need to be reviewed. This section will look at three main discussions: firstly, a discussion regarding the definition of inequalities, reviewing different approaches to it from economic and social justice theories (Rawls, 1971; Sen, 1979, 1999; Cohen, 1989, 2000; Wright, 2003; Fraser, 1996; Nussbaum, 2003); secondly, a discussion about the role of space and city production: housing policies, like any socioeconomic policy, create a certain relationship between the state and individuals (King, 2003), and this relationship has spatial implications built on the city; cities, therefore, are discussed as the main product of a strong relationship between social process and space production (Harvey, 1973, 2008; Soja, 1989, 2010; Lefebvre, 1991, 1996; Fainstein, 1999); and thirdly, a discussion about housing, as the focus of this research: housing is understood as a multidimensional process, which engages with the construction of city at different scales, from the very individual meaning to the citywide production, as a process that is not limited to individual shelter provision (Turner, 1972, 1976; Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Fiori and Brandão, 2010; Fiori, 2014; Martin et al., 2015). Housing production has agency at the level of the city, and therefore housing policies must be understood as city policies.

Figure 2.2 | Three conceptual discussions



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These three conceptual discussions are synthesised in Figure 2.2 and the diagrams that follow. Throughout the different sections of this chapter, a series of diagrams complement and summarise the theoretical and conceptual discussions. The use of these diagrams helps not just with visualising the different sections, but with organising the information and proposing specific relationships between the various conceptual dimensions. This revision ends up with a specific proposal about the relationship among them, which seeks to explore the role that housing policies may have in bringing about social justice and reducing multiple inequalities.

2.2.1 Defining inequalities

Linking housing policies and the reduction of inequalities requires a discussion about the definition of inequality, the history of ideas behind it and the particular tensions between quantitative and qualitative aspects of it. We have already discussed why inequalities should be at the core of social policies, but what do we mean by inequalities? How do we define them beyond their purely economic meaning and measurement? How do we qualify them as the *object* of social policies without being over simplistic?

Although traditionally inequality has been studied and defined as the problem of income or wealth distribution and concentration, there is a rich history of studies focusing on the multiple nature of inequality, and for some time it has been studied in its multiplicities and complexities. From a liberal economy perspective, since the introduction of Sen's *capability approach* theory, there has been a series of efforts to define the diverse phenomena that inequalities embrace. As a critique of utilitarian equality, Sen builds upon Rawls's (1971) concept of equality of *primary social goods*, defined as "'things that every rational man is presumed to want,' including 'rights, liberties and opportunities, income and wealth, and the social bases of self-respect'" (Sen, 1979:214). Sen's contribution to the equality discussion is based on the idea that "[n]on-exploitation, or non-discrimination, requires the use of information not fully captured either by utility or by primary goods" (Sen, 1979:217), introducing the concept of *basic capability equality*. According to Sen, "the focus on basic capabilities can be seen as a natural extension of Rawls's concern with primary goods, shifting attention from *goods* to *what goods do* to human beings" (1979:218-219; emphasis added).

Sen's contributions have impacted a series of development debates beyond the inequality discussion: "The literature acknowledges Sen's attempt to break from utilitarianism by expanding the informational basis for development, moving from an income-led definition of development to one based on multiple ends" (Frediani, 2010:175). Martha Nussbaum, whose ideas build upon Sen's capability approach, has dedicated her work to defining the content of such capabilities as a list of things that humans should *be able* to do:

> [I]f the issue of social justice is important, then the content of a conception of justice is important. Social justice has always been a profoundly normative concept, and its role is typically critical: we work out an account of what is just, and we then use it to find reality deficient in various ways (Nussbaum, 2003:47).

Sen's work hasn't been exempt from criticism. On the one hand, there has been some discussion regarding the fact that individual capabilities and freedom would perpetuate neoliberal logics, unless they are approached from a collective perspective (Frediani, 2009). Also, it has been argued that the liberal nature of Sen's ideas has contributed to de-economising and de-politicising discussion about poverty and development. The question of *'Equality of what?'* posed by Sen in 1979 – and addressed by him with the capability lens – has had many possible answers since then from diverse perspectives and disciplines, expanding the understanding of redistribution problems towards one that also incorporates qualitative aspects such as recognition, integrating elements of economic, social and political equality.

In his extensive work on inequality, the political philosopher G.A. Cohen discusses the egalitarian principle as "a policy of rendering the worst off people as well off as possible" (Cohen, 2000:15). In a concise and powerful statement, he defines the egalitarian principle in this way: "the primary egalitarian impulse is to extinguish the influence on distribution of both exploitation and brute luck" (Cohen, 1989:908).

According to the sociologist E.O. Wright, a *socially just society* would be one in which "all people would have broadly equal access to the social and material conditions necessary for living a flourishing life", defining a *flourishing life* as one that "does not privilege one kind of capacity over another. These capacities are intellectual, physical, artistic, spiritual,

social, and moral. A flourishing human life is one in which these talents and capacities develop" (Wright, 2013:4). Wright defines the *egalitarian principle of social justice* in terms of "material *and* social conditions necessary to flourish", understanding social conditions as "a much more heterogeneous idea [that] includes such things as social respect, community, solidarity, and trust. In a just world, all people would have broadly equal access to such social conditions" (Wright, 2013:4).

Some authors propose the idea of *equal opportunities* as the main element to consider in discussing inequalities, given that "redistribution is not only about redistributing incomes, but also about redistributing opportunities" (Sefton, 2008:610). According to Wright, however, this ideal would fail to embrace the complexities of inequalities, and we should rather work with the idea of equal access. He points out the limitations of the concept of equal opportunities with the following example:

> Equal opportunity has a number of limitations. It is satisfied by a world in which there is a perfect lottery at birth in which 10 percent of babies get to live a flourishing life and 90 percent live a life of deprivation. That is a version of equal opportunity, but hardly what anyone would consider just (Wright, 2013:4).

Ultimately, the idea of equal access is understood as a "more compassionate view of the human condition than simple equal opportunity, but also a more demanding principle of justice: in an ongoing way throughout their lives, people should have access to the conditions to live a flourishing life" (Wright, 2013:4).

'Equality of what?' becomes then a question with multiple answers. In the Chilean context, the sociologist Pedro Güell proposes that "rather than talking about inequality itself, we should focus on the constellations of lived inequalities, that means, on the specific junction between inequalities and equalities that characterise the situations, relations and perceptions of specific people and groups" (Güell, 2013:9).

So far, we have mainly discussed economic and social inequalities through their respective disciplines. In order to discuss political inequalities, it is also necessary to discuss the distinction between quantitative and qualitative inequalities. The relationship between quantitative and qualitative inequality is not a neutral one in which both have

the same character. To examine how they relate to each other we will first review some social justice theory, and then propose a specific framework for relating them.

Following the previous discussion, social justice theories present a lens of analysis that helps us to set up a framework in which inequalities become multiple:

> Social-justice theorists, such as Fraser (1995, 2008), Gerwirtz (1998, 2006) and Young (2000, 2006a, 2006b), are all concerned with the dynamics of how different institutions (including the state and the market), as well as socio-cultural and politico-economic processes, structure the (re)distribution of resources, rights and values across, between and within societies with reference to democratic societal development (MacPherson et al., 2014:18).

Nancy Fraser's work focuses on the challenges of social justice dealing with the struggles of both *redistribution* and *recognition*, in other words, of social injustice as the combination of *economic mal-distribution* and *cultural misrecognition* (MacPherson et al., 2014). Fraser distinguishes two kinds of injustice: "[t]he first is socioeconomic injustice, which is rooted in the political-economic structure of society. (…) The second kind of injustice is cultural or symbolic. It is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication" (Fraser, 1995:70-71). Each of these injustices would require different answers: while the former needs a process of *redistribution,* the latter requires *recognition*. This distinction, as she asserts, is mainly analytical, as "redistributive remedies generally presuppose an underlying conception of recognition" (1995:73).

The distinction between recognition and redistribution is a useful lens for conceptualising the multiple inequalities that housing policies need to face, but a limited one regarding the complexities that emerge in the relationship between quantitative and qualitative inequalities that this research wishes to present. As has been acknowledged, quantitative measures of inequality are not able to capture its multiple dimensions. Qualitative aspects of inequality embrace social and political recognition, but they also include access to public services and goods, education and health understood as rights, and an improvement in quality of life that involves aspects of freedom, coexistence, and daily lived experience; ultimately, both quantitative and qualitative inequalities are about social class and social identity, as distinct from income inequality.

The relationship between quantitative and qualitative aspects of inequality is a complicated one. This has been acknowledged by authors such as Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) and Stiglitz, who recognise the interaction between the economic and political dimensions of inequality. Stiglitz argues that "economic inequality begets political inequality and vice versa" (2013b:53).

If we define inequalities in economic, social and political terms, it implies that while the first encompasses disparities in the distribution of resources, the last ultimately involves the misdistribution of power. In this sense, the tails of the spectrum of inequalities (resources and power) represent the extremes of quantitative and qualitative inequalities. And even if the *base* of power can take multiple forms, wealth is and has been historically the *de facto* base of power (Dahl, 1957; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012). And as wealth is at the base of power, it is very difficult to challenge power (and political inequalities) if wealth is not redistributed.

In other words, one could argue that societies are able to reduce inequality in economic terms (measured through indices such as the Gini or Palma) without having a reduction in qualitative terms. But it would be very difficult to sustain the argument in the reverse direction: that a reduction of qualitative inequality can happen without a reduction in economic terms. In other words, a reduction of inequality in qualitative terms is only possible if it happens along with a reduction in economic terms. Otherwise we are just facing a process of recognition, which could hardly be seen as inequality reduction.

Quantitative redistribution implies more equal access to resources and social services, while the qualitative aspects involve access to social assets, rights and power. Authors like Cohen have discussed this relationship between access to resources, services and power, stating that it is "false that the power difference is the fundamental injustice, in every relevant sense. It is, of course, the *causally* fundamental injustice, but it is not, in a certain relevant sense, the normatively *fundamental* injustice" (Cohen, 2000:19).

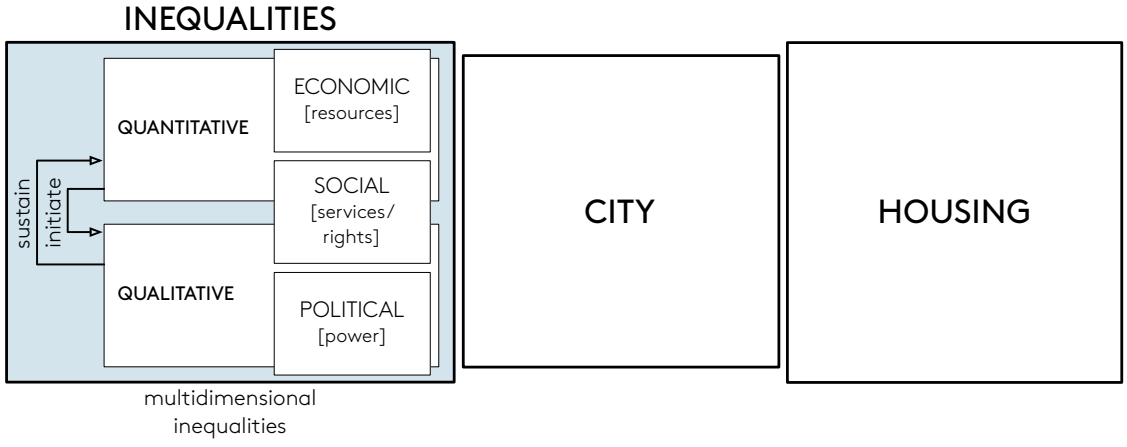
The specific relationship between quantitative and qualitative inequality reduction that we want to propose for this research is as follows: the reduction of quantitative aspects is

necessary and fundamental to initiate a process of reducing inequalities, but it can only be sustained and intensified over time if it is accompanied by qualitative inequality reduction, involving aspects of recognition, power, and also changes in the quality of life at different levels. The reduction of qualitative aspects of inequality should be able to trigger cultural, social and political transformations that support the long-term consolidation of economic redistribution. Without these qualitative aspects, economic redistribution may last for just one generation, and inequalities might deepen again over time.

As summarised in Figure 2.3, the definition we will use encompasses an understanding of the reduction of inequalities in the economic sense (unequal distribution of resources), the social sense (unequal access to services and rights) and the political sense (unequal distribution of power). It implies addressing problems of quantitative inequalities to initiate a process of transformation, and addressing problems of qualitative inequality to sustain these changes over time, as expressed by the arrows in Figure 2.3. As next section will discuss, spatial inequalities will be understood and discussed as a general lens that crosses all other debates.

This is where housing policies can play a key role; they can contribute to reducing economic inequality trough the redistribution of economic assets, but they could also have the potential to reduce qualitative inequalities, and therefore to strengthen reduction in inequalities and make such reduction sustainable.

Figure 2.3 | Defining inequalities



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2.2.2 Cities: Space, inequality and the city as a project

The various dimensions of inequality do not take place nowhere, they are spatially situated, they occur in cities that materialise and qualify disparities. As this research focuses on housing, the production of space and cities becomes not just a background where inequalities take place, but an integral part of their reproduction. In this section we discuss their spatiality, as the economic, social and political scales of inequality have a territorial and spatial dimension. To do so, this section is organised around three discussions: firstly, a revision of the debates about space, that mainly reviews the repositioning of space claimed by Marxist geographers and thinkers; secondly, a discussion about space and inequality both from a sociological and social justice perspective; and finally, a revision of the notion of the city as a project and the role of housing in it.

The task of unpacking the notions of justice and equity on one side, and space on the other has been central during recent decades from both a philosophical and geographical perspective. These discussions have been grounded on a series of philosophical definitions that have repositioned and redefined the role of space in this discussion. As Foucault expressed it decades ago, historically "[s]pace was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic" (in Soja, 1989:10). This notion of space has been systematically contested over time by different voices, whose main representatives have been authors such as Lefebvre, Soja and Harvey.

Based on a critique of this epistemological position of space, Lefebvre's work seeks "to expose the actual production of space bringing the various kinds of space and the modalities of their genesis together within a single theory" (Lefebvre, 1991:16). His work searches for a 'unitary theory' able to "construct a theoretical unity between (…) first, the *physical* – nature, the Cosmos; secondly, the *mental*, including logical and formal abstractions; and thirdly, the *social.* In other words, we are concerned with logico-epistemological space, the space of social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias" (Lefebvre, 1991:11-12). The 'trialectical' approach to space

introduced by Lefebvre has been extraordinarily influential in the repositioning of the notion of space: "Geographical thinking, Soja argues, was defined by this limiting dualism (first and second space) until the 1990s, when Lefebvre's work was first translated into English" (Hernández, 2010a:96).

Discussions about the social production of space and its definition have implied a repositioning of the role of space in the understanding of the social, challenging the hegemony of history as the main component of the traditional Marxist dialectic: "The dialectic today no longer clings to historicity and historical time […] To recognize space, to recognize what 'takes place' there and what it is used for, is to resume the dialectic" (Lefebvre, 1976, in Soja, 1989:43).

The centrality of space implies an understanding of the interconnection between the structure of the space and social transformations, as two entities that influence each other. Or, as Harvey puts it, "spatial form and social process are different ways of thinking about the same thing" (1973:26). The inclusion of space as a significant analytical category has been referred to by Harvey as the *geographical imagination*, a spatial approach to problems, to life and to the social, that enables the individual "to relate to the space he sees around him, and to recognize how transaction between individuals and between organizations are affected by the space that separates them" (1973:24).

Soja recognises those notions as follows:

> The structure of organized space is not a separate structure with its own autonomous laws of construction and transformation, nor is it simply an expression of the class structure emerging from social (and then aspatial?) relations of production. It represents, instead, a dialectically defined component of the general relations of production, relations which are simultaneously social and spatial (Soja, 1989:78).

The interconnection between the social and the spatial inevitably leads one to argue that there is also a connection between space and inequalities. In this respect, and particularly in relation to the interconnection between space and power, Lefebvre discusses the

Gramscian idea of Hegemony, pointing out: "Is it conceivable that the exercise of hegemony might leave space untouched? Could space be nothing more than the passive locus of social relations, the milieu in which their combination takes on body, or the aggregate of the procedures employed in their removal? The answer must be no" (Lefebvre, 1991:11).

An important contribution in this direction has been the conceptualisation of the Right to the City (Lefebvre, 1996; Harvey, 2008) that we will discuss later in this chapter, as well as the notion of Spatial Justice developed by Soja. According to Soja, justice "has a *consequential geography*, a spatial expression that is more than just a background reflection or set of physical attributes to be descriptively mapped", as "these consequential geographies are not just the outcome of social and political processes, they are also a dynamic force affecting these processes in significant ways" (Soja, 2010:1-2).

There have also been attempts to explore the relationship between inequalities and space from the discipline of sociology. As noted by Labao et al. in their book *'The sociology of spatial inequality',* however, this notion has been long overlooked in sociological debate:

> Inequality –the study of who gets what and why– has been at the heart of sociology since its inception. However, this simple formula fails to acknowledge that where is also a fundamental component of resource distribution. […] Sociology has long been concerned with inequality and with the spatial settings in which social life occurs. But these two concerns evolved rather separately through independent subfields, bridged today in limited ways (Lobao et al., 2007:1-2).

The question is, therefore, how space becomes part of the explanation for inequality. According to Loboa et al. four main points might explain the relationship:

> One is to recognize that space intersects with primary social statuses in complex ways (McCall 2001). […] Second, space is seen as channelling inequality processes, sometimes constraining, sometimes amplifying their effects (Clegg 1989; Swanstrom et al. 2002). […] Third, there is recognition that space itself is created through inequality processes. Social relationships are space forming (Soja 1989). […] Finally, spatial and inequality processes can be treated as causally intertwined (2007:10).

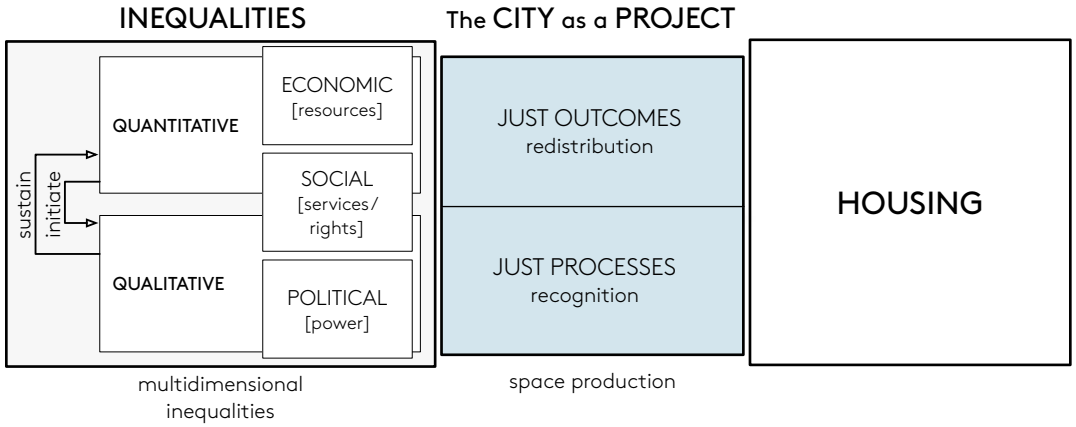
There have also been important contributions to the debate from a social justice perspective. Susan Fainstein has studied extensively the relationship between social justice and the city, looking for an urban theory of justice (1999, 2010). One of the main contributions of her work lies in the distinction between *just processes* and *just outcomes* in city production. According to her, different authors take diverse positions in this distinction, and although many of them may "share a commitment to building a city that provides social justice and symbolic recognition to all its citizens, they differ on whether such a city is characterized by process or outcome, method or results" (1999:259). While she identifies authors such a Harvey and other Marxist thinkers as being on the *outcome* side, those who focus on collaborative and communication planning such as Haeley and Young would be on the *process* side.

If we return to Fraser's understanding of social justice as a redistribution and recognition problem, what is interesting regarding Fainstein's categories is that somehow they correlate with them. A planning or urban design that focuses mainly on a just outcome would have the redistribution question at the centre of it. Likewise, those approaches focused on just processes would be rather centred on questions of recognition. In her words, while the first one understands that in producing a *good city* "ultimate condition matters more than how it is achieved" (Fainstein, 1999:252), the second one will see the good city as one that "allows the retention of group identities and the explicit recognition of difference" (Fainstein, 1999:260). As with Fraser's dilemma of the contradictions and complementarities between redistribution and recognition, Fainstein's '*Just city'* reflections question to what extent a just process ensures a just outcome, while at the same time examining how a focus on outcomes could reinforce totalising definitions from dominant elites.

As has been discussed, however, quantitative and qualitative inequalities interact in a complex way, as the reduction of quantitative disparities is needed in order to initiate a redistribution process, but decreasing qualitative inequalities is necessary in order to make it sustainable and deeper over time. We argue here that the same logic can be applied regarding the production of cities, particularly in the dichotomy between *just outcomes* (that involve quantitative redistribution) and *just processes* (that involve processes

of recognition and eventually qualitative inequality reductions). In other words, as shown in Figure 2.4, in the production of cities and space a focus on outcomes that contribute to the redistribution of wealth is necessary to initiate a process of decreasing inequality, but if those outcomes are not accompanied by just processes that trigger recognition and qualitative reductions of inequalities in the city, the redistribution achievements will hardly be sustained over time.

Figure 2.4 | Space, the city and inequalities



Source: Author

A final debate introduced here is the idea of the city as a project. *Space,* as a theoretically meaningful dimension and an analytically key component to understand social process and transformation, puts *Cities* – as the main political-spatial entity (Hirst, 2005) in which social relations take place – as a central object of design and analysis. Cities cannot be understood as the background where social interactions take place, but as both an agent and a consequence of those interactions. By shaping cities we are shaping societies, and vice versa.

Both from a planning perspective and an architectural theory perspective, the production of cities has in some moments of history been understood as a project, with debates about the outcome/process tension, and in which housing plays a key role. The period of history in which modernist architecture took place is a clear example of this, in which housing design and production was a core element of such construction: "Throughout the world, the heroic days of slum eradication, mass housing and modernist urban planning were characterised by a strong belief in the power of architecture and urbanism

to promote development and to shape social relations" (Fiori and Brandão, 2010:183). This period, according to the same authors, was followed by anti-design critiques and discourses, opposition that led to a *despatialisation* of the debate (Fiori, 2014) and "to a growing loss of the city scale and, ultimately, of the city itself" (Fiori and Brandão, 2010:184).

The role of architecture and planning in designing the city project has therefore changed over the years. In the modernist era of the 1950s and 1960s, for example, "architects played a key role through their design of large social-housing blocks into which the poor were relocated" (Hernández, 2011:68), helping on some occasions to render the poor invisible, while on others allowing the construction of social housing close to city centres. However, according to Hernández, in this city project "the poor were subjected to the values of the elites: if the poor are to live in cities, they should conform to the ways of life of the middle and upper classes and in buildings similar to theirs" (2011:69).

The modernist project was widely disseminated in the construction of post-war Europe, as well as in the developmentalist era that followed radical processes of urbanisation in Latin America. The increase of urban population amplified the pressure for massive production of housing by the state, allowing modernist architecture and conceptions of the city to be displayed, as we will review later in a historical revision. Both in Europe and Latin America, the production of housing embedded in a specific architectural language was essential to the modernist project and the production of cities. According to Kenny Cupers, looking at what he calls 'the social project' of housing during those years in France, "[t]he upshift of housing production during the postwar decades was… not just a quantitative shift but a qualitative one. It changes the role of modern architecture at large. […] Never before was an entire generation so aware of how much better off they were than their parents – measured first of all in the social and material realm of everyday life" (Cupers, 2014:xii).

This *social and material realm of everyday life* referred by Cupers is the crystallisation of the modern project, which finds its materiality in the production of cities through the housing project. As the following decades witnessed the failure and fall of the modernist

project, design principles behind modern housing estates also withdrew from mainstream ideas, as housing was essential to a social vision that embraced the city as a project. If nowadays we normatively define inequalities reduction as the main object of social policies for the reasons described above, then housing and the city as a project should find a way to build a new *social and material realm of everyday life*, in which design and space have a role to play in promoting and qualifying equality.

The notion that quantitative and qualitative inequalities are materialised by space, and therefore by housing policies as a city project, implies a call for attention to be paid to housing production, architecture and design. Using Rancière's work, Boano and Kelling (2013) have elaborated on these ideas. According to them, "Rancière's *spatiality of equality* aims to highlight the political dimension of design and architecture, which to date has not been sufficiently elaborated" (Boano and Kelling, 2013:42). Authors such as Murie and Forrest have referred to this relationship between space (particularly housing) and inequality as *essential reciprocity*, in other words that "housing position is class (labour market) dependent, but housing itself also transforms this class division" (in Aalbers and Christophers, 2014:381).

It is in this context in which housing, defined as a project with impacts at different scales, can play a role in reducing qualitative and quantitative inequalities, qualifying the city and therefore the social and material realm of inequalities in everyday life. Accordingly, the next section discusses the definition of housing, and how a different understanding of it could actually trigger reduction in inequalities.

2.2.3 Redefining the scale and nature of housing as urbanism

As in the previous discussion, there are some definitions regarding the meaning and scope of housing that are the basis of the main arguments of this research. These definitions, as we will discuss henceforth, relate to the fact that housing (and hence housing policies) act as an agent of city production, and therefore have the potential to be understood *as urbanism*. Housing cannot be mistaken as just a shelter, a collection of walls and a roof, as "[h]ousing is always more than just housing. It provides shelter, but fulfils other functions as well" (Madden and Marcuse, 2016:85). In this section, we will discuss and

redefine the meaning of housing, building a theoretical approach to it that will allow us to define a framework of analysis in which housing, city production and reductions in inequality can be part of the same question.

This framework is based on the notion of *housing as urbanism* that gives the title to this research. This term seeks to give an account of housing as a material realm, a social position and a political device that shape our everyday life and the ways in which the city works. Urbanism is a realm undertaken by multiple disciplines and with various possible definitions. It is a spatial practice that seeks to address and bring together the different processes and logics that take place in the city:

> Urbanism is about applying appropriate tools and instruments of design which can enhance connectivity across diverse urban conditions while contributing to redesigning urban institutions and regulations so that they can take such diversity into account. In this sense, each intervention in the city is also, by definition, about transforming the nature of the city itself, rather than just requalifying part of it (Fiori and Brandão, 2010:190).

The concept of *housing as urbanism* has been used before to refer to the complexity and scale of housing beyond its definition as isolated units. In his efforts to draw out tendencies and issues in the contemporary history of planning and urban development from the housing perspective, Barry Goodchild refers to the term as follows:

> A contemporary history of residential landscapes focuses on housing as 'urbanism' (…) the focus is on urbanism understood as a hybrid field of study between urban design, urban geography and urban planning. Housing as urbanism is concerned with living conditions, with the physical form of housing, with the management of urban growth and sometimes the management of urban decline (Goodchild, 2008:3).

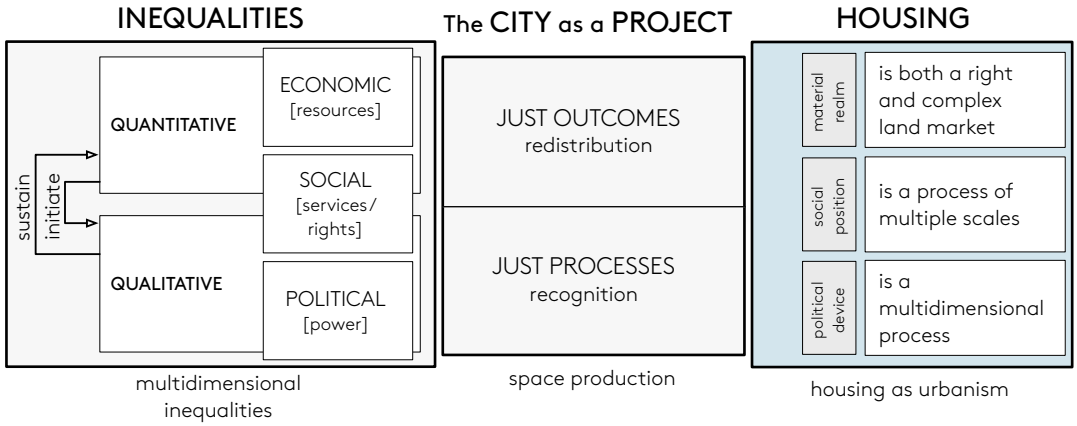
Likewise, the concept of *housing as urbanism* has been used to refer to the generation of policies that, particularly since the early 1990s in the Latin American context, developed "urban projects with a strong sense of the city and of the urban condition" (Fiori et al., 2014:8), and helped "to bring back the role of urbanism –as a spatial discipline and practice– to the forefront of the pursuit of improving urban social policies" (Fiori and Brandão, 2010:181).

The concept of housing can be defined and discussed from multiple perspectives, as Madden and Marcuse point out:

> Housing means many things to different groups. It is home for its residents and the site of social reproduction. It is the largest economic burden for many, and for others a source of wealth, status, profit, or control. It means work for those who construct, manage and maintain it; speculative profit for those buying and selling it; and income for those financing it. It is a source of tax revenue and a subject of tax expenditures for the state, and a key component of the structure and functioning of cities (Madden and Marcuse, 2016:11).

In this section, we will review a series of aspects that define housing in a wider and more complex way, in order to understand its potentials in the process of reducing inequalities. As there are many possible approaches that contribute to building the idea of housing as urbanism, the discussion is organised by summarising the aspects that redefine the scale and nature of housing in three topics (see Figure 2.5): firstly, housing is both *a right and a complex land market*; secondly, the multiplicity of issues related to housing production imply that it is *a process of multiple scales*; and thirdly, housing is *a multidimensional process*.

Figure 2.5 | Conceptualising Housing as Urbanism



Source: Author

a. Housing is both a right and a complex land market

The first aspect to consider in defining housing is the notion of housing as both a right and a complex market, particularly related to land markets. In other words, there is a need to acknowledge that housing can be understood both as *home* and as *real*

estate (Madden and Marcuse, 2016). The definition of housing as a right puts it in the sphere of public interest, and is usually quite central in discussions, advocacy and movements related to the Right to the City (Lefebvre, 1996; Harvey, 2008; Mayer, 2009). Historically, the right to housing has been one of the pillars of social struggles, along with issues such as education and labour rights, and governments and public bodies have concentrated efforts for more than a century on dealing with housing production. But in the context of neoliberal policies – as we will review later in the case of Chile – the absence of planning as a powerful tool of city shaping put market dynamics as one of the main forces that determines city production. The fact that housing works both as a right and as a market is part of its complexity. As Aalbers and Christophers point out, "[t]he – literally – vital imperative of housing to social reproduction helps explain, in large part, the persistence and power of the discourse of a "right" to housing, as opposed, pointedly, to the "right" to buy and sell it" (2014:381).

The housing market, however, works in ways that distinguish it from other markets. According to Martin et al.:

> [the] housing market distinguishes itself from other markets. Its commodities are fixed; its rootedness in place inextricably links it to vital aspects of life beyond simply providing shelter; its production occurs over extended periods of time and is cost intensive; and there are highly emotional values attached to it (2015:31).

It is important to emphasise the intimate relationship between housing and land, housing policies and land policies, housing rights and land rights, and the housing market and the land market. Land, like housing, has been conceptualised both as a right and as a market. It is and has been at the centre of debates about urban poverty, which have focused particularly on the importance of access to secure tenure and well-located land. The intimate relationship between housing and land is particularly relevant given the key role that land (and housing) play in the property system that lies underneath the whole economic system in market-led societies:

> Property and land were, and still are, foundational to both power and wealth. The tensions present in acquiring and maintaining power and wealth are embedded in a property system that brings into play an entire social order, and in which housing relations today figure prominently (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014:373).

Most of these debates have focused, from different perspectives, on the necessity of having efficient systems of land management, involving a wide proportion of the population that is usually excluded from it. Accordingly, authorities, scholars and organised civil society in many countries of the so-called global south look for answers to the problem of land security, as ensuring land rights would have the ability to trigger wider processes of transformation:

> Land rights deliver dynamism and create power: they increase human capacity, for example to build, grow, produce, run a business and other activities. An owner can organise other people, enjoy a larger realm of decision impact, and given enough land, he can make a difference to the lives of other people (Denman, 1978, in Wallace and Williamson, 2006:128).

There are various approaches to debates about land rights and security. Some focus on the importance of building land markets, including approaches that emphasise the role of land administration systems, taxation, and specifically the municipal revenue options and the role of land in this (Devas, 2003; Ingram and Hong, 2010). Others focus on the importance of access to property, as in the work of the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, who maintains that the urban poor hold a number of resources in different forms that cannot be adequately incorporated into a market and, therefore, transformed into capital (De Soto, 2001).

All these debates hold up a notion of ownership models, assuming "a unitary, solitary, and identifiable owner, separated from others by boundaries that protect him or her from non-owners and grant the owner the power to exclude" (Blomley, 2004:2). They assume the condition of commodity of land and housing. As Arjun Appadurai proposes, "the commodity situation in the social life of any 'thing' [is] defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present or future) for some other thing is its social relevant feature" (1986:29). The emphasis on exchangeability that the definition of land (and housing) as commodities supposes is in evident tension with the idea of rights. This is even more dramatic in places where housing has been highly commodified, and where it "is not produced and distributed for the purposes of dwelling for all; it is produced and distributed as a commodity to enrich the few" (Madden and Marcuse, 2016:10).

Alternative approaches developed by authors such as Varley and Roy, who have questioned assumed dichotomies between legal and illegal, or formal and informal, challenge ideas such as De Soto's 'neoliberal populism' (Roy, 2009). As Varley points out:

> [A] belief in the efficacy of legalization as an engine of social and economic change that depends on the binary opposition of "legal" and "illegal" reflects the power of the dualisms that have shaped western thought (Varley, 2002:450).

According to Wallace and Williamson (2006), land markets are complex systems that can be described mainly in terms of three components: firstly, land, as territoriality; secondly, land rights, as the legal status defining the relationship between subjects; and finally, the idea of complex commodities, in which the cognitive capacity of market participants is key, as is "the ability to trade in rights in addition to land itself" (Wallace and Williamson, 2006:125). This notion of complex commodities is key for land and housing in contexts in which market logics operate, as it allows the development of links between the underlying definitions of housing and land as both a right and a market.

b. Housing is a process with multiple scales

The second aspect to consider in redefining housing concerns scale. What do we build when we build houses? What is the scale of impact, the footprint, of housing production? Housing is a means of city production that affects multiple scales: from the very intimate sphere of home, through the design of the space in which family and personal dynamics take place, to the kind of socio-spatial relations that we build as a society through the order of the city. Housing production embraces aspects and processes that are multidimensional and multiscalar.

At the very intimate level, housing might act as our position in the world. Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling start their book '*Home',* whose aim is "to provide a critical geography of home from domestic to transnational scales" (2006:i) with the questions "What does home mean to you? Where, when and why do you feel at home?" (2006:1). As the objective of the book suggests, they use these questions at the very individual level as a gateway to discuss issues at diverse scales, including the global dynamics behind

housing production. There have been many efforts to discuss the complex and multiple meaning of home (see Benjamin, 1995; Rapoport, 1995; Blunt and Dowling, 2006), and through this, of housing. As Papastergiadis expresses it, "apart from its physical protection and market value, a home is a place where personal and social meanings are grounded" (in Blunt and Dowling, 2006:22). At the individual level, 'house' has different meanings and involves diverse values for each person according to their gender, age, class and personal history:

> A house is a place where people and ideas gather and find shelter. In this sense it is a social enclosure, not without its repressions, competitions, and eradications, but a place where sociability is rehearsed and produced […] A house is also an engine of display and acculturation, a capital commodity, a private desire (Phillips and Erdemci, 2012:17).

But, as has been said, housing projects are not just about building individual units, but about shaping neighbourhoods, bringing infrastructure, consolidating communities and therefore producing cities. Housing, as the set of efforts put together to provide homes, includes not just the private space, but also the city and the social and political relations built alongside it. Housing is understood as a key component of the city as an indivisible right. As a city builder, housing has a specific type of agency which goes beyond the effects it has on individuals: housing agency is an urban/spatial agency, and therefore *housing policy* must be conceived as a *city policy,* proposing a city project, a spatiality and materiality of a proposed social order.

This change of scale in the understanding of housing requires a discussion about the meaning of scaling-up housing solutions. Scaling-up is more than a change of size, as embracing different scales implies recognising the multiple aspects that the process of housing production involves: "there is convergence around the general idea that scaling-up requires a more complex multi-dimensional and integrated approach", and a "search of synergies across a variety of social, political, institutional and spatial processes, all of which are interconnected and operating at different scales simultaneously. Scaling-up […] is a function of the way in which those processes interact" (Fiori and Brandão, 2010:182-183).

The articulation of multiple scales through housing poses important challenges to its production, as it requires us to understand that housing, as a process, has a footprint that exceeds the physical boundaries of the house. The concept of footprint has been used "to describe the ambition of impacting beyond site on a large system if relations, and indeed across systems" (Fiori, 2014:45), describing "a multiplicity of 'footprints' operating in multiple dimensions and at multiple scales" (Fiori, 2014:44).

In terms of policy design, this change of scale poses a particular challenge for housing policies, questioning their nature as providers of individual answers. Housing policies are probably one of the most notable cases of extremely *targeted* policies, meaning that a central criterion in their design is the capacity of the state to focus its actions and resources only on those who cannot afford to purchase services in the market. In areas such as education, health or transport, the *targeting* principle tends to deepen segregation as it results in separate services for those who can pay and for those who cannot, and tends to sharpen inequalities, as services targeted just for the poor will always be worse than those designed for everyone (Horton and Gregory, 2009).

In contrast to targeting principles, universalism implies that "the entire population is the beneficiary of social benefits as a basic right" (Mkandawire, 2005:1). The distinction between targeting and universalist policies is easy to understand in services such as health and education, but it is more complicated to apply to housing, as targeted actions are required for the provision of houses: a policy of free housing for everyone would not make sense in any society open to the market. But the assumption that housing policies are actually city policies implies that some kind of universalist perspectives needs to be included in the design of housing policies, as being committed exclusively to targeting principles would produce cities 'for the poor' and cities 'for the rich' as two separated systems. Some kind of *Urban Universalism* needs to be applied, which "implies the recognition of a universalist approach to the city, in which some kind of positive discrimination is used as a tool for inclusion, embedded in the view of the city as a universal right (…) to build *cities for everyone*" (Cociña, 2018).

In their attempt to reach their goals in quantitative terms, this scale at the city level is probably the most easily forgotten in the design and implementation of housing policies, and is key in the study of the means through which housing can become a vehicle for reducing inequalities.

c. Housing is a multidimensional process

The third consideration lies in understanding housing as a multidimensional process, with both individual and collective exercises of creation of value. The notion of housing as a process rather than an object, as a verb rather than a noun, was introduced more notably by the British architect John Turner (1972, 1976) after his work during the 1960s in informal settlements in Peru. In the context of increasing pressure for access to urban land, millions of families had moved to cities in an unprecedented scale, building and consolidating informal urban areas. Facing and working on this reality, Turner developed a body of work compiled in his books *'Freedom to build'* and *'Housing by people'*, in which he argues for an understanding of the value generated through informal processes of housing production, in the context of the general failure of the modernist approach to mass housing in the Latin American context.

Turner's seminal work has been key to the understanding of housing. As he points out, "[i]n English the word 'housing' means both the stock of dwelling units (a noun) and the process by which that stock is created and maintained (a verb)" (Turner, 1976:60). In theoretical terms, probably the main consequence of such understanding is the displacement of the question of housing value from *what it is* to *what it does* to people. It implies a focus not just on the exchange value of housing but also on its use value:

> It is entirely reasonable to speak about the market value of houses. It is also entirely reasonable to speak about the human and social values of housing action, or housing processes. But it is absurd to mix these sets of terms and their meanings. (…) what it *does* for people is not described by housing standards, i.e. what it *is*, materially speaking. Yet this linguistic inability to separate process from product and social value from market value is evident in both commercial and bureaucratic language (Turner, 1679:60-61).

The notion of housing as process has been key to the development of more complex understandings of housing and city production. Based on Turner's work and his own experience as a practitioner, Nabeel Hamdi has developed the idea of *enabling* rather than just *providing* as a key aspect of strategic action planning (Hamdi, 2010). In his book *'Housing without houses'* (Hamdi, 1991) he builds upon Turner's and Habraken's work, maintaining that *houses* are just part of the process of *housing*, pointing out the importance of developing a new set of design capacities in architects and planners for such a change of paradigm.

In more recent efforts to conceptualise housing, the notion of *process* keeps occupying a central position, and most definitions given in contemporary literature include this idea. According to Martin et al., housing should be understood as "the material, social, institutional, and economic process that determines where members of a society sleep at night –where they live and love, and perhaps where they die" (Martin et al., 2015:10) The same authors stress: "housing is a verb; it does things as well as represents them" (Martin et al., 2015:11).

Beyond the theoretical distinctions, these notions have also been central in the approach to housing in both developing and developed countries for decades, and influenced many of the debates during the 1980s and 1990s, both in academia and in the international development agenda. Regarding the latter, institutions such as the World Bank saw in Turner's ideas a fertile field to advocate for the withdrawal of active action by the state in direct housing production (see Burgess, 1992; Fiori and Ramírez, 1992), using freedom discourses to support the development and expansion of neoliberal and structural adjustment programmes in the developing world (Frediani, 2009). The World Bank found in Turner's work "a philosophy on user participation that was attractive to international funding agencies because through it they saw economies to their own organization and political favors for their government counterparts and because they could do both with some social grace" (Hamdi, 1991:48).

Nowadays it is impossible to dismiss the idea of process in the design of housing policies that have greater ambitions and comprehensiveness in their goals. Such a process involves

questions about design, community engagement and adaptability. As a process, housing needs to engage with multiple dimensions, articulating a city and political project at multiple scales, including economic, social and political dimensions and their material realm.

As summarised in Figure 2.5, these three components (housing as a right and as a complex market; housing as a process of multiple scales; and housing as a multidimensional process) allow us to describe the complexities it encompasses when understood *as urbanism*. It is in the recognition of this multidimensional and multi-scalar nature of housing that the links between housing policies and reduction of inequalities through the production of cities lie.

2.3 Framework of analysis: A proposal of bridges between housing, the city and inequalities

We have so far defined the reduction of inequality as a desirable object of socioeconomic policies such as housing, arguing that both historic trends, the complicated relationship between inequality and poverty alleviation, and normative positions justify this proposition. We have also discussed the definition of inequality, particularly the tension between quantitative and qualitative aspects of it, arguing that reduction in qualitative inequalities is necessary to sustain and deepen the reduction of quantitative disparities over time. We have discussed the role that space and the city may play, as housing policies take place in the city, building the *social and material realm of everyday life*. And finally we have discussed the different aspects of housing understood as urbanism. Based on these debates, we want to propose here a specific framework in which housing can act as an agent of reduction in inequalities in their economic, social and political dimensions.

There have been attempts to build this relationship from different perspectives. In their recently published report *'The Art of Inequality: Architecture, Housing, and Real Estate'*, Martin et al. (2015) look at this linkage in the context of the real estate market in the United States. In doing so, they remark that "housing is not just an indicator of deeper

trends; it consists of techniques that contribute to and perpetuate the very conflicts that it might seem only to reflect" (Martin et al., 2015:10-11), adding that "the space of house and housing (…) are not just coincidentally instructive examples of inequality; they define it" (2015:31).

Based on the debates and considerations discussed in the previous sections, we will go on to propose a series of conceptual bridges (see Figure 2.6) that describe the ways in which housing production can contribute to the decrease of multiple inequalities. In terms of economic inequalities, we propose that housing policies can trigger their reduction mainly if they define housing as a *productivity trigger and an asset*, increasing the productivity capacity of families and territories and enlarging the capacity of people to get new assets. In social terms, we propose that housing policies can reduce social inequalities if they are defined and understood as a *platform to the city at multiple scales*, increasing access to the collective resources that the city – as an indivisible right – should bring, and improving everyday life experiences. And in terms of political inequalities, we propose that housing should be understood as *a multidimensional process*, triggering redistribution of political power, collective recognition and political participation in decision making processes at different levels.

A house is our material realm, is a social position, and is a political device, in which each of these three dimensions take place and interacts. Through its space and materiality, through the urban relations, through everyday life and experiences, the house is a device that speaks about the city as a whole and about the particularities of the life it embraces.

These bridges constitute the main analytical lenses that will be deployed in the case studies that follow. The previous discussion, along with the different elements that each of these bridges encompasses, constitutes the analytical framework used. Each of these three perspectives – or bridges – which might have agency over inequalities at different dimensions and scales, is summarised in the sections below.

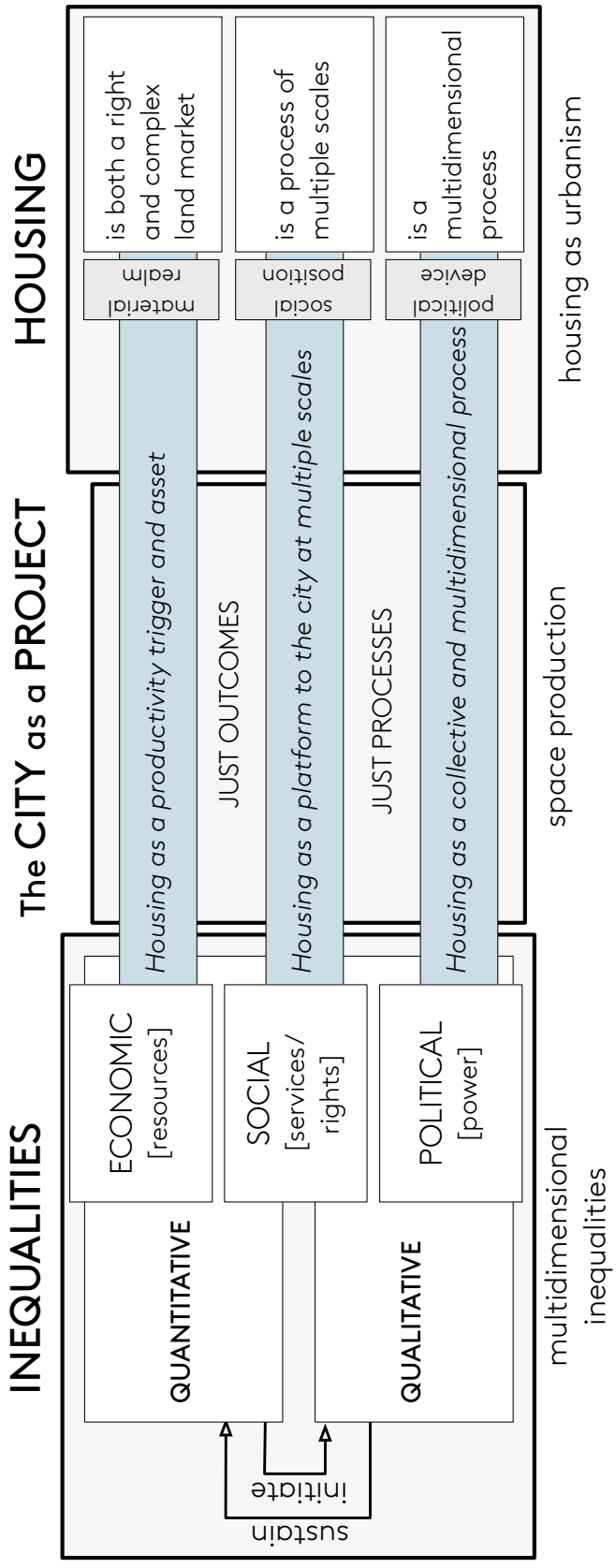


Figure 2.6 | Framework of analysis: Bridging Housing, City and Inequalities

Source: Author

2.3.1 Economic inequalities: Housing as a productivity trigger and an asset

Probably the most evident way in which housing policies can contribute to decreasing quantitative inequalities is by triggering production, both in terms of macroeconomic dynamics, as at the level of households: through either subsidies, land titles or loans, housing policies introduce liquidity to the market and transfer capital to families, incorporating them into the economy, and mobilise the economy as a whole. It is not a coincidence that during financial crises and economic busts, both the private and public sectors prioritise the activation of the construction and housing sectors, given the close relationship between housing production and capital circulation.

This relationship has been widely acknowledged by different scholars, most notably by David Harvey, who has argued for a theory of urbanisation and urban capitalism from a Marxist perspective (Harvey, 1973; 1982; 2008), studying in particular the circulation of capital in built environments and city production, and questions about the production and control of surplus during urbanisation processes. According to Aalbers and Christophers, Harvey's wider argument lies in the fact that "financial institutions see the built environment – which includes but is not limited to housing – as an asset in which money can be dis/invested by directing and withdrawing capital to the highest and best use" (2014:379).

As Harvey points out, urbanisation has always been "a class phenomenon, since surpluses are extracted from somewhere and from somebody, while the control over their disbursement typically lies in a few hands" (2008:24). As urbanisation plays a significant role in capital circulation, it can foster redistribution or accumulation patterns in a substantial way. This idea is relevant to this research as it highlights the fact that the creation of value during the housing process is not always even, concentrating or distributing surplus production according to how it is designed and displayed, and therefore strengthening or challenging inequalities.

If housing is understood as a productivity trigger at different scales, focusing on increasing the democratic control over the value generated by urbanisation, such control

over surplus production would contribute to the redistribution of wealth, contesting the *accumulation by dispossession* (Harvey, 2003) that usually characterise the capitalist logic of city production.

An additional approach to housing as an instrument for decreasing economic inequalities is the understanding of housing as both an individual and a collective asset. According to Moser and Dani, housing can be defined as "often the most important productive asset of the urban poor" (2008:24). Furthermore, they define housing as an insufficient but necessary good to increase productivity of other assets.

In economic terms, the idea of housing as an asset can be summarised as the capacity of housing to store value. Beyond the pivotal role of housing production in capital flows, during their lifetime houses play a key role in capital circulation, as they are able to store value and to work as assets. As summarised by Aalbers and Christophers, "housing's physical materialization as a product of labour is only one small dimension of its significance to capital circulation (…) Value, under capitalism, also has to be stored. And while money – cash – is one vehicle of such storage, it is not the only one. Housing is another" (2014:376).

Understanding housing as an asset rather than a fixed good implies an approach to housing through asset-based social policy, recognising that "assets can enhance the effectiveness of public policies in achieving social and economic development by increasing the capability of people to strengthen their asset base, obtain higher returns on their assets, and attain more secure livelihoods" (Moser and Dani, 2008:3). This implies approaching the design and production of housing from a perspective in which it is not a fixed good, but one that may be transformed and changed to be activated as an asset that increase its value, increasing therefore the capacity for action and agency of dwellers.

Capital takes a series of primary forms that could be summarised as circulation, social relations and ideology, and housing plays a role in each of these (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014). Regarding the last two, it is clear that housing cannot be regarded merely as a fixed commodity and, as we have discussed regarding land, it embraces a

series of complexities. As presented in the previous section, the scale of housing extends beyond its own physical limits. In economic terms, one could say that the productive footprint of housing incorporates its neighbourhood area and even the city in which it is placed. Housing becomes a productive territory (Fiori et al., 2014), and plays a role in engaging in wider economic networks, productivity clusters and value production chains.

2.3.2 Social inequalities: Housing as a platform to the city at multiple scales

The second aspect of inequalities that housing policies should be able to tackle relates to social inequalities, understood as the lack of equitable access to rights, to services and to the collective social resources of the city. The main manifestation of social inequalities lies in the disparities in the capacity to exercise rights. These disparities emerge from a series of conditions that include socioeconomic, age, gender, and overall class differences. The way in which housing is displayed in the territory can have consequences in these different manifestations of inequality.

This notion builds upon the understandings of housing as a productivity trigger and an asset, moving away from static and materialistic definitions of housing: "To think about housing only as a store of wealth, as a prerequisite of reproduction and as a tool of redistribution however, is to overlook the fact that social exploitation occurs *in and through* housing, too" (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014:381).

As housing is not just shelter but also an engine of city production, the understanding of housing as a platform to the city is a key feature in defining the ways in which housing can be a tool for reducing social inequalities, both quantitative and qualitative. A house implies a position within the city, and as such it opens the possibility of exercising the right to “change ourselves by changing the city”, which is how Harvey (2008:23) defines the *Right to the City*, based on the Lefebvrian conception of creation of rights through political action. It “focuses on the question of who commands the necessary connection between urbanisation and surplus production and use” (Harvey, 2008:40). In a contemporary context, the Right to the City has become a slogan that “seek[s] to

influence public policy and legislation in a way that combines urban development with social equity and justice" (Mayer, 2009:368). It constitutes a mechanism for self- and reciprocal determination.

The main implication of the approach to housing as a means to consolidate the Right to the City is the change of scale that it implies: from the understanding of housing as an individual mechanism for triggering productivity, and an individual and collective asset, to the recognition of the multiscalar problem of being part of the city as a political-spatial entity. Now to be able *to change ourselves by changing the city* towards a more equal society, the position within the city is a key element. And housing, among other things, defines the location of dwelling and the place from which people approach the city daily.

Urbanisation processes, particularly those led by market logics applied to land and housing, have become a mechanism of exclusion of the urban poor from well-located land. As Madanipour explains, "the land and property markets have operated so as to ensure the segregation of income groups and social classes. Commodification of space has led to different patterns of access to space and hence a differential spatial organization and townscape" (2007:163). As he points out, the main consequence of such segregation processes is the consolidation of exclusion patterns operating in the economic, political and cultural arena with socio-spatial manifestations. Exclusion then "becomes an operating mechanism, an institutionalized form of controlling access: to places, to activities, to information" (Madanipour, 2007:160).

Housing policies can act as instruments either to strengthen or to challenge these processes of exclusion. In so doing, they are dealing (or not) with social inequalities at different levels, particularly through the strengthening of segregation patterns. There has been an extensive body of research focused on the origins of housing segregation. In his far-reaching work on the topic, Loïc Wacquant reflects on the political roots of urban marginality and segregation: "urban outcast is the product of an active process of institutional detachment and segregation (in the etymological sense of 'setting apart') fostered by the decomposition of the public sector" (Wacquant, 2008:224).

The negative effects of segregation have been conceptualised by various authors through different mechanisms. Some authors refer to the idea of 'neighbourhood effect' to "measure how neighborhood social processes bear on the well-being of children and adolescents" (Sampson et al., 2002:447), while other authors have referred to the idea of a geography of metropolitan opportunities (Galster and Killen, 1995) affected by segregation. The location within a city that housing provides has consequences in multiple arenas: "The poor location of housing may, for instance, increase commuting times and hamper access to good schools, clean air, transportation and a wide range of other services, recreational and commercial spaces, and so forth" (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014:380). According to the UN Development Programme (PNUD, 2009), inequalities are grounded in a series of supports, one of them being inequalities in the *use of time*. Location within a city and its consequences for commuting time are examples of this. In this regard, inequalities can be considered less related to a fixed location, but rather as mobile gradients within the city (Jirón, 2010a).

Segregation and its effects have been particularly studied in the case of Chile from an urban perspective and in relation to housing production (Ducci, 2000; Sabatini et al., 2001, 2008; Rodríguez and Sugranyes, 2004, 2005; De Mattos et al., 2004; Salcedo, 2010; Márquez, 2011) as well as from an economic standpoint (Sanhueza and Larrañaga, 2007). There have also been discussions (both critical and supportive) about what has been called the 'mirror effect hypothesis', which proposes that inequality and segregation reflect each other, and that "economic globalization results in inequality and that inequality in turn necessarily reinforces residential segregation" (Sabatini and Salcedo, 2007:583).
The idea that housing policies should work towards a conception of housing as a platform to the city seeks to give account of the effects of segregation and other exclusion patterns, proposing that ensuring the role of housing in providing and facilitating access to services and urban rights is key to tackling social inequalities. This returns to the question of the city as a project, and the values (of integration, exclusion and segregation) that such a design project proposes and underpins.

2.3.3 Political inequalities: Housing as a collective and multidimensional process towards redistribution of power

Finally, the idea that housing is a process opens up the possibility of thinking about its potential for reducing political inequalities through the construction and shaping of a political project within the city, and for contributing to the distribution of power. Housing has both emancipatory and oppressive potential, and this, coupled with the ideas discussed above of multidimensionality and multiple scales of operations, is what makes housing a deeply political project.

One lens that can be used to explore these issues is the idea of strengthening the political capacities of collective capabilities and organisations through housing production processes. Studies of the increased capabilities resulting from housing production have been widely developed, at least in terms of home ownership and productive capabilities. As stated by Raj, "improved access to home ownership among low-income households enhance[s] capabilities and 'productive' consumption" (1985, in Pugh, 2004:48). The concept of capabilities, however, has been acknowledged over the years as a much more complex and multifaceted notion than productivity capacities. From a liberal perspective, Sen's concept of *development as freedom* (1991), in which people are perceived as agents of change rather than recipients of it, and freedom as the opportunity to achieve rather than having autonomy of decision, redefines the role of capabilities within housing production towards the notion of increasing citizens' agency.

According to the UN Development Programme, factors that promote inequality take different forms, and power is of course one of them: "the distribution of power is a source of inequality […] and the power games are both the practical expression of the various forms of inequality present in the interactions, and at the same time a source of those inequalities" (PNUD, 2009:59). Increased capabilities as a result of housing processes are a mechanism to challenge such power relationships, reduce qualitative inequality, and therefore consolidate trends of quantitative inequality reduction over time.

As well as discussing capabilities, the political potential of housing needs to be linked to debates about conflict and democracy. As described by Madden and Marcuse, "[t]o say that housing is political is to say that struggles over dwelling space are inextricable from conflicts over power, resources, autonomy, and agency" (2016:87). In order to trigger redistribution of power, or as Rapoport defines empowerment, a process "where people, organizations and communities have control over their affairs" (in Sanoff, 2008:62), housing policies need to encourage processes that deepen democracy. This is not an easy task in a context in which the social field has been widely extirpated from forms of real political exchange, and in which in the eyes of public policies, "the poor are assumed to be certain kinds of subjects of aid" (Han, 2012:21) and are rarely seen as actors with political agency.

The French philosopher Alain Badiou (2013) discusses '*The political field today*', identifying that the difficulty in today's global scenario would be in extricating ourselves from consensus: we are no longer able to locate adversaries and enemies in the political arena, and we place conflict outside our *civilised* world. According to Badiou, "when the main contradiction is between the civilised and the barbarian, as at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire, politics no longer exists. There is the police, there is possible war, but there isn't politics […] We have to escape, as a result, from consensus" (2013:3).

Chantal Mouffe (2005) in her attempt to describe the elements of a *plural and radical democracy,* calls for an understanding of the post 1990 world as a scenario in which we have witnessed an explosion of *particularisms* and pluralism that challenge Western universalism. This supposes an increased challenge to politics and democracy regarding the *recognition* struggles presented previously by Fraser. Mouffe defines the voices in conflict as something that "should be considered not as an enemy to be destroyed, but as an adversary whose existence is legitimate and must be tolerated" (2005:4). This notion is built upon the idea of the impossibility of a world without *antagonism*, and therefore the necessity of political conflict, given that "healthy democratic process calls for a vibrant clash of political positions and an open conflict of interests" (Mouffe, 2005:6). In her words:

> Liberal democracy requires consensus on the rules of the game, but it also calls for the constitution of collective identities around clearly differentiated positions and the possibility of choosing between real alternatives. This 'agonistic pluralism' is constitutive of a modern democracy and, rather than seeing it as a threat, we should realize that it represents the very condition of existence of such democracy (2005:4).

This framework, along with the work of philosophers such as Jacques Rancière, has been used by some authors for discussing the potential productive nature of conflict in urban processes (Miessen, 2010; Swyngedouw, 2010), understanding that through conflict resolution – as opposed to pre-defined consensuses – different voices can play a role in the process of urban production, which becomes an even more urgent task in urban settings characterised by diverse and heterogeneous population, or *cosmopolis* in which the *urban conversation* does not always include everyone (Sandercock, 2003). In his urban interpretation of Mouffe's work, Markus Miessen points out that "[a]ny form of participation is already a form of conflict" (2010:91). In his book *'Designing the Post-Political City and the Insurgent Polis'*, Erik Swyngedouw (2010) refers to the 'post-political consensus' city, where neither democracy nor politics are possible. This idea of politics only being possible through conflict poses very particular challenges for social policies that seek to redistribute power.

From this perspective, what are the main implications for housing policies that want to tackle political inequality? Firstly, we should return to the idea of *housing as process.* As we have discussed, the notions introduced by Turner are key (1972, 1976), where the question of value of housing is in *what it does* to people and not just in *what it is*. If housing is a process rather than just an object, the possibility of building new forms of power through that process emerges, not just in terms of the production of housing itself, but related to the transformations in terms of political power that housing can trigger in individuals and communities: "the spatial relations of housing are not constitutive in a socially abstract sense but are themselves always and everywhere the outcome of social, power-laden processes" (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014:380). Furthermore, given that housing is a process grounded in the city as a collective entity, this process should be conceptualised as a collective one, with multiple scales, translated into increased

organisation within communities, local democracy and eventually redistribution of power within and among different communities in the city.

In order to achieve these changes in terms of capabilities and eventually power, it is necessary to trigger a political process, and therefore to recognise differences and to create spaces of conflict and conflict resolution, with decentralised and democratised structures. This implies challenging static notions of communities and collectives. As Guijt and Shah present it, "simplistic understandings of 'communities' see them as homogenous, static and harmonious units within which people share common interests and needs" (in Cooke and Kothari, 2001:6). This becomes particularly relevant and challenging in the context of high levels of violence, where managing conflict resolution is extremely delicate and is key to triggering synergic and transformative processes of collective organisation able to challenge power misdistribution and political inequalities. The challenge is even bigger in contexts in which political networks of clientelism (or "Poor people's politics", as it is called by Auyero (2001)) dominate most of the collective interfaces in terms of dependency, assistance and cultural representations (Auyero, 2001; Arriagada, 2013).

These challenges require returning to questions of housing exchange and use value, and particularly of how the latter can play a central role in the design of policies. This task becomes particularly difficult in the context of what has been called the *contradictions of housing under capitalism*: "the contradiction between housing's use value and exchange value, and the tensions that result from expecting and encouraging the former to be delivered by a system which relentlessly prioritizes the latter (c.f. Christophers 2010)" (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014:389). In other words, one should acknowledge the fact that the "economic system is predicated on the idea that there is no conflict between the economic value-form of housing and its lived form. But across the world, we see those who exploit dwelling space for profit coming into conflict with those who seek to use housing as their home" (Madden and Marcuse, 2016:18).

Final comments: A house as a material realm, a social position and a political device

This chapter constitutes an attempt to put together a body of reflections that allows us to understand the possible ways in which housing policies and the reduction of inequalities could interact, and why this relationship is worth exploring. After reviewing the reasons behind the normative definition of inequalities as the core object of social policies, both in historic and conceptual terms, we have extensively reviewed the fields of inequalities, city production and housing. Finally, we have proposed a series of understandings of housing or conceptual bridges that would allow housing policies to tackle economic, social and economic inequalities, and therefore to take care of both quantitative inequalities (necessary to start a process of redistribution) and quantitative ones (which would allow for sustained and deepening redistribution over time). Proposing these bridges has been a theoretical exercise, but also an attempt to recognise practical potentialities and challenges for housing policies that are more ambitious in their scope, exploring the way in which multiple urban scales are addressed by housing as a city project.

These three bridges are constituted by the ideas that housing should be regarded and treated as a productivity trigger and an asset, as a platform to the city at multiple scales, and as a multidimensional process, in order to tackle inequalities in the economic, social and political fields respectively. At the base of these proposed links, in addition to the wide theoretical discussions sustained on this chapter, lies the very simple, quotidian and domestic experience of everyday household lives: a house is our material realm, is a social position, and is a political device.

It is our *material realm*, the physical space that supports our daily life and gives support to families' activities, livelihoods, dreams and aspirations. It is the physical place where we usually meet with our most intimate circle of people, where we save our goods and store our wealth, where we shelter from the outside, where we rest at night and, usually, imagine our future. It is, for most people, the most important material and economic resource we hold and treasure.

It is a *social position*, a location, a system of symbols that is embraced differently by diverse ethnic, social, gender and age groups; it is the 'where' you live, the 'where are you from'. It is part of a wider system of multiple 'wheres', in relation to several networks with which we are connected: the houses of our friends, colleagues and partners, the public services, our jobs, our doctor, hairdresser, parks, markets. It is part of our collective identity; it is where we stand when we claim our rights.

And it is a *political device*, a time container of our personal and collective stories. There are personal, family, neighbourhood and national events linked to episodes related to the house: 'the year we moved in…'; 'when we built the extra room…'. There is a personal and collective story associated with our housing struggles. There are different stages of our lives and community changes linked to the housing process and the transformation of our neighbourhood, its infrastructure and our city over time. There are social and power relationships that emerge from our houses and neighbourhoods.

Recognising this triple condition (as an economic, social and political device) allows us to recognise the potentials of housing in the urgent and essential task of reducing inequalities, addressing the task of, on the one hand, centring the reduction of inequalities in the discussion of urban and housing policies, and on the other, centring housing policies and their multiple and wide potentials in the discussion about the reduction of inequalities.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology: Positioning the Research and Discussing Methods

Introduction

This chapter aims to present the methodological considerations and the process behind the use of specific methods and approaches in this research. As discussed in the introduction, it is important not just to list the different procedures used to address the questions asked in this research, but also to discuss the decisions that shaped the research design and the conceptual and practical approaches considered.

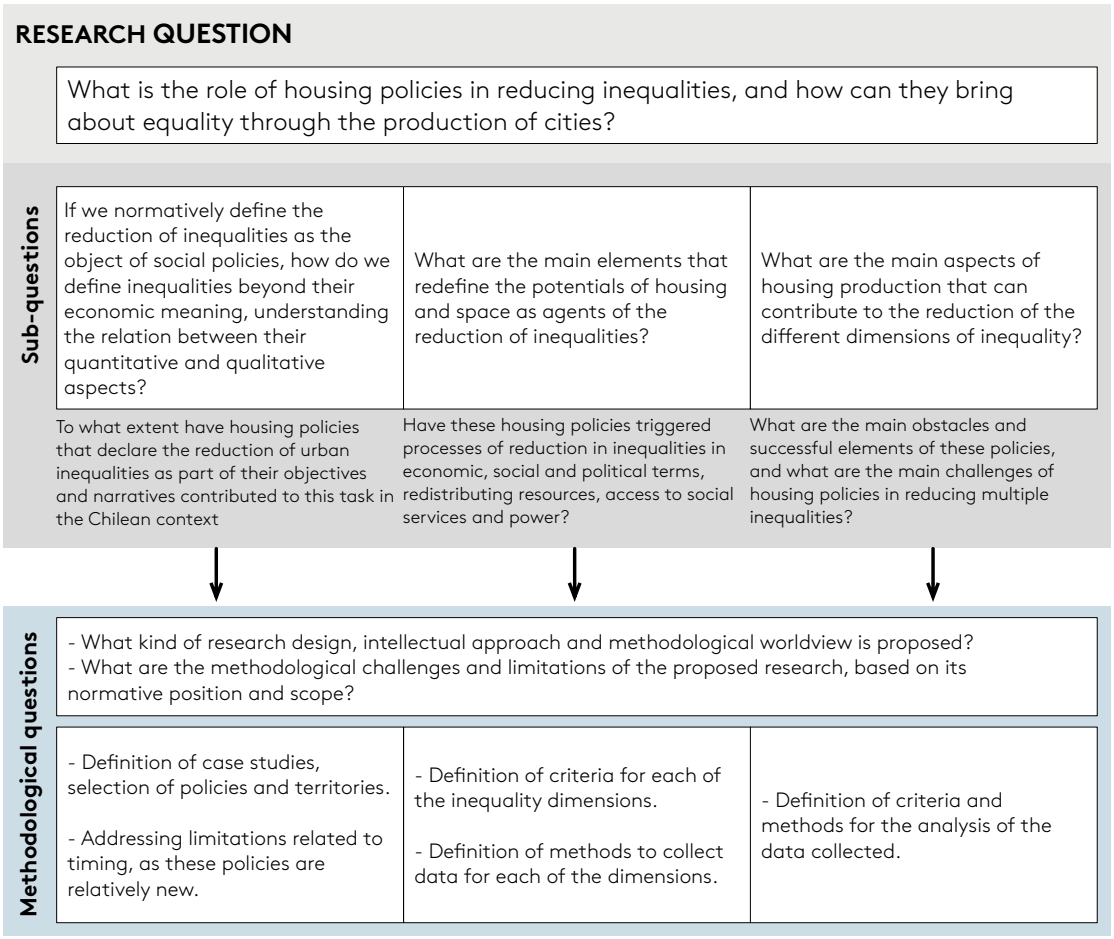
The general question behind this research is what the role of housing policies in reducing inequalities is, and how they can do this through the production of cities. This enquiry and the sub-questions discussed in the previous chapters need a series of methodological definitions regarding the research design. This chapter addresses this set of definitions.

To organise these definitions, a series of methodological questions were defined. On the one hand, there are general questions regarding the methodological standpoint: What kind of research design, intellectual approach and methodological worldview are proposed? What are the methodological challenges and limitations of the proposed research, based on its normative position and scope? And on the other hand, there are questions about the specific methods used to collect and analyse data. This second set of methodological definitions is directly related to the sub-questions that this research proposes.

As shown in Figure 3.1, each sub-question is associated with some methodological questions: in answering to what extent housing policies that declare the reduction of urban inequalities as part of their objectives and narratives have contributed to this task, there is a need to define the case studies, selection of policies and territories, as well as to

address the limitations related to the fact that these policies are relatively new. In order to determine whether or not these housing policies have triggered processes of reducing inequalities in economic, social and political terms, there is a need to define the criteria and methods used to collect data for each of the inequality dimensions. And finally, in order to answer the question about the main obstacles and successful elements of these policies, there is a need to define the criteria and methods for the analysis of the data collected.

Figure 3.1 | Research questions and methodological sub-questions



Source: Author

In accordance with this structure, the chapter is organised in two parts. First it presents a discussion that explores the general methodological questions, the considerations for this particular research design and discusses the specific approach used, debating on the one hand the main epistemological and research design decisions, and on the other the main methodological challenges regarding its limitations and assumptions. Second, it offers a

description of the methodological design, the selection of case studies and the specific methods used. It presents a reflection about both the selection of the cases in the area of Bajos de Mena (BdM), and the specific housing programmes studied. Regarding the methods, it presents an explanation about the ways in which research questions, theoretical framework and design methods interact. The methods used for data collection, discussed further in the second section of this chapter, are mainly the revision of historical literature and official documents; secondary data on physical, economic and social conditions of the area; interviews with authorities, policy makers, academics and practitioners; interviews with community leaders; walks and storytelling with neighbourhood dwellers; participatory observation of community meetings and events; and the analysis of secondary data about the programmes, including market prices, public investment, housing design, location and services.

3.1 Positioning research: Methodological design discussions

3.1.1 Considerations and assumptions for research design

As was discussed in the previous chapters, this research is based on a series of normative positions, namely the idea that socioeconomic policies like housing policies should define as their object the reduction of inequalities. What are the methodological implications of this standpoint? How does this impact on the definition of methods, cases and approach?

The main methodological complexity of this research derives from the fact that it seeks to study a phenomenon that has not necessarily occurred: the capacity of housing policies for reducing inequalities. The research is based on an ideal, a hope, a projection, and researches the present and the past to find cracks or spaces to open up alternative futures. This normative position implies a need to observe a series of phenomena from a specific position, namely, that we are looking at the territories and realities to identify if something that we define as desirable is taking place. This also means that rather than going into the field to prove or demonstrate a hypothesis, the methodological approach creates the tools to observe a series of phenomena and practices, and to understand the spaces in which housing policies are, or can be, instruments for the reduction of inequalities. In that sense, it seeks to understand in which ways and to what extent they

have been sources of equality, rather than to prove that they have failed or succeeded following *x* or *y* rules.

The distance from a methodological design based on a hypothesis testing approach is important beyond its practical considerations: it constitutes a wider critique of social science research in general, and highlights the importance of introducing approaches that go beyond traditional research design coming from natural science. This critical view has been deeply developed, both from philosophical perspectives (see e.g. Latour, 1993), and from more pragmatic approaches focused on the design of adequate methods for meaningful social science research, understanding the importance of realistic approaches (see e.g. Sayer, 1992), and the significance of a reorientation of methods, given that "social science emulation of natural science is a cul-de-sac" (Flyvbjerg, 2001:4).

The research approach relates to the framework proposed by Flyvbjerg (2001), who called for a *phronetic* social science, using the classical Greek concept of *phronetic* as an entry point. *Phronesis* concerns values and interests and therefore goes beyond scientific and analytical knowledge (episteme) and technical knowledge (*techne*), involving the process of balancing knowledge by value-rationality, or what he calls 'the art of judgment', and placing power at the core of the methodological questions. According to Flyvbjerg, this concept concerns value-rational questions, and can be translated into English as 'practical judgment' or 'practical wisdom'. In that sense, Flyvbjerg proposes a series of value-rational guidelines that researchers should follow: focusing on values; placing power at the core of the analysis; getting close to reality; emphasising little things; looking at practice before discourse; studying cases and contexts; joining agency and structure; and having a dialogue with a polyphony of voices (Flyvbjerg, 2001:129-140). Even if this research does not exactly follow the methodological guidelines proposed by Flyvbjerg for *phronetic* social science research, there are some elements of his approach that have helped to shape it. It is also closely related to the notions discussed in the introductory chapter, relating to the importance of not neglecting the role of emotions in defining the boundaries of interaction between the individual and the social (Ahmed, 2004).

Following this approach and building upon this notion of value-based knowledge, for example, this research is based on the idea of *arguments* rather than the notion of hypothesis, and particularly on the question of how to put together a series of theoretical and empirical arguments that are able to build new ideas and deepen knowledge about a specific topic, in this case the role of housing policies in bringing about equality in the city. In that sense the focus has already, in the theoretical discussion introduced in the previous chapter, been much more on the construction of arguments, conceptual bridges and theoretical frameworks, and not so much on defending or protecting an assumed hypothesis. The normative character of this research is already an hypothesis, both political and intellectual, and therefore the focus of the empirical work is not on proving it, but on expanding and exploring the main features, challenges, and what Haeley (2006) has called 'cracks', recognising the main achievements and obstacles in the construction of the desired order set by that original position.

This determines the design of the investigation in many ways. In the design of the theoretical framework, for example, what was discussed in the previous chapter was basically the definition of a series of lenses that are used to observe and describe the reality of territories and policies. In the design of methods, because of these value-rational questions, it was key to place power and political and spatial dynamics at the centre of the housing question.

At this point, it is important to introduce some discussions more specifically about the methodological debates that frame the research design, based mainly on the work of Creswell (2009). Creswell's work proposes that research design involves the interaction of three elements: (1) philosophical worldviews, (2) strategies of inquiry and (3) specific methods, and he suggests a series of options for each of them. Thus, he proposes that the philosophical worldviews can be postpositive, social constructivist, advocacy-participatory or pragmatic; the strategies of inquiry can be quantitative, qualitative or mixed; and the research methods are composed of elements such as questions, data collection, data analysis, etc. Below we briefly review the approach used in each of these aspects as proposed by Creswell.

In terms of methodological worldview, Creswell defines the pragmatic approach, in contrast with post-positivism, constructivism and advocacy worldviews, as one in which "[t]here is a concern with application – what works – and solutions to problems (Patton, 1990). Instead of focusing on methods, researchers emphasise the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem (see Rossman & Wilsom, 1985)" (2009:10). This research uses this approach as it seems more coherent with the value-concern idea of *phronesis* and the normative standpoint already discussed.

In that sense, rather than an emphasis on the design of a specific set of methods for enquiring into certain kind of information, this research proposes collecting a body of evidence of different types that helps one to understand a phenomenon in a more complex and holistic manner. Aligned with this idea of multiple sources and methods, in terms of strategy of enquiry this research is based on case studies and sequential mixed methods. Case studies, as defined by Creswell, "are a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time" (Crwsswell, 2009:13). The emphasis on the depth of the exploration is what makes this strategy appropriate for the approach proposed. Exploring in-depth case studies allows emphasis on everyday life, lived inequalities, values and relationships. The case studies will relate to neighbourhoods located in a territory in Santiago in which housing policies have involved with programmes that in their narratives and objectives include elements of urban equality.

Specifically, this research uses mixed methods for the case studies, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Part of the challenge that this research proposes is to understand inequality from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective, and therefore the methods used are consistent with this this dual approach to inequality. The methods used are sequential mixed methods, as they seek "to elaborate on or expand on the findings of one method with another method" (Cresswell, 2009:14), exchanging the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Then, using the lenses developed in Chapter 2, this research uses a series of case studies from the same territory to examine the proposed questions. It examines two housing programmes, which have declared the reduction of urban inequalities as part of their objectives and narratives, exploring to what extent these housing policies have contributed to reducing inequalities in economic, social and political terms. It also examines what the main obstacles and successful elements of these policies are, and researches two urban plans using these elements as lenses of analysis. Through these enquiries it seeks to contribute to the production of knowledge, to the discipline of urbanism, to the understanding of the role of housing, and to the multiple aspects of a complex territory. In such a production of knowledge, there is an attempt not to dismiss the assumptions and positionality behind this research, paying due attention to the limitations they presume and acknowledging the partial nature of its objectives.

3.1.2 Limitations and responses

Some of the theoretical assumptions that this research proposes have been addressed in the previous sections, through the discussion about the normative role of social policies and the definition of inequalities, the city as a project, and housing as urbanism. However, there is a series of limitations and constraints related to the empirical work proposed that need to be addressed, summarised in the following points and Table 3.1:

1. As the research takes place in more than one neighbourhood impacted by different housing programmes, there is a series of aspects that vary between neighbourhoods. In order to reduce these variables to the minimum, the studied neighbourhoods are located in the same territory and with a relatively similar history. Even though some particularities of each neighbourhood are still different, most characteristics (location, socioeconomic composition, access to services, administration and authorities) remain the same.
2. As will be discussed later, the territory where the neighbourhoods are located, BdM, can be considered quite unique, given its characteristics and scale, and the attention it has received from the authorities and the media. In conversations with the authorities and policy makers, they all agree that the scale of BdM is what constitutes its uniqueness, as most of the social problems it embraces are equally present in other

poor areas of the city of Santiago. In order to ensure that the conclusions of this research go beyond the specificities of this territory, the focus is on programmes at the scale of the neighbourhood rather than of the whole area.

3. Given that the programmes and policies studied are relatively new (all implemented after 2006) it is very difficult to measure their long-term effects, particularly considering that the aspects of inequality are multidimensional and expected to have visible effects in the long term. Given this, the data and information are analysed in relation to their capacity to be *conducive* to reducing inequalities, looking for indications of possibilities rather than actual change, and particularly focused on the qualitative aspects.
4. This timing limitation also implies that it is difficult to measure the effects of the programmes at two different points in time, before and after the interventions, as some interventions are still ongoing or have just ended, and the data may not be available. Because of this, rather than comparing the neighbourhoods at different points in time, the research focuses on a comparison of the different neighbourhoods to explore the extent to which the different programmes may have had dissimilar consequences.
5. Access to updated quantitative data is limited, as the information provided by the last census (2012) has been qualified as unreliable by the authorities. Different sources of quantitative information provided by alternative institutions are used to complement this data. Additionally, the production of qualitative and mapping data fills some of the gaps.
6. The previous discussion has presented the idea of the city as a project, and the notion of housing footprint beyond the site size, but this research focuses specifically on data collected at the household and neighbourhoods levels – although some citywide dynamics are explored from a quantitative perspective. The focus on this scale is for two reasons: firstly, because of the complexity of gathering information at the city level relating to the emphasis on everyday life, lived inequalities, values and description of relationships; and secondly, because the researched policies are actually very targeted in the area, so there is an assumption that their impact at the city scale is limited. There is, however, a rationale to understanding the city logic and urban dynamics from inside the area, seeking to explore from within the households,

neighbourhoods and the territory of BdM, the complex networks, perceptions and connections of the city as a whole.

7. Being from the same city where the research is conducted, and having being involved for some years in professional, academic, and political activities, could be seen as a limitation in terms of reaching different voices. Additionally, being a young woman coming from an educated family on the other side of the city, produces an inevitable distance and even distrust. These conditions are an unavoidable fact, so gatekeepers were key to engaging with local people. The first contact through programme officers enabled me to get in touch first with community leaders, who are mainly women, and through them with the rest of the residents, with mutual understanding and respect. The bias in this pattern of engagement was acknowledged by considering the absent voices and unreachable residents as evidence of the existence of operating networks.[1]

Table 3.1 | Limitations and responses

Limitation	Responses
The different programmes studied have been applied in different neighbourhoods	All neighbourhood studied are in the same territory (BdM) reducing the variables that differ from one to another.
The uniqueness of Bajos de Mena as a case	The cases are studied at the scale of the neighbourhoods rather than the whole area, focusing on problems that are common to other areas of the city.
Time: Programmes have all been implemented recently	The information is analysed in relation to its capacity to be conducive to reducing inequalities, looking for indications of possibilities and focus in qualitative aspects.
Time: No data of before/after situation	The focus is on a comparison between the different neighbourhoods rather than comparing the neighbourhoods at different points in time.
Unreliable census	Different sources of quantitative information are used to complement this data, and qualitative and mapping data are used to fill possible gaps.
Scale: The neighbourhood vs. the city	Understanding the city logic and urban dynamics from within the households, neighbourhoods and the territory of BdM. Use of quantitative data at city level.
Positionality of the researcher: Gender, class, politics	Acknowledging undeniable conditions. Use of key gatekeepers: first contact through programmes officers, and then community leaders - mainly women.

Source: Author

[1] There are also many limitations encountered during the process of this research that are not directly linked to the case study, but are related to the actual process of executing the research, which go from practical aspects of coordination and reaching interviewees and data, to more personal events that made the process, in occasions, extremely difficult. To this respect, I should probably mention some people whose actions, directly or indirectly, conscious or unconsciously, made it particularly hard, and therefore this thesis was submitted *despite* their actions; among others, Ben Jenkins.

3.2 Methods design

This section presents the methods and instruments used in this research, organised in three parts: an explanation of the selection of the case studies; a description of the criteria and methods for data collection; and the analysis methodology used.

3.2.1 Selection of case studies

The process of decision-making about the case studies was determined mainly by two choices that influenced each other: the decision about the policies and programmes that this research was going to look at, and the decision about the territory or territories to be researched. Even though these were not sequential decisions but rather parallel ones, each of them is explained below.

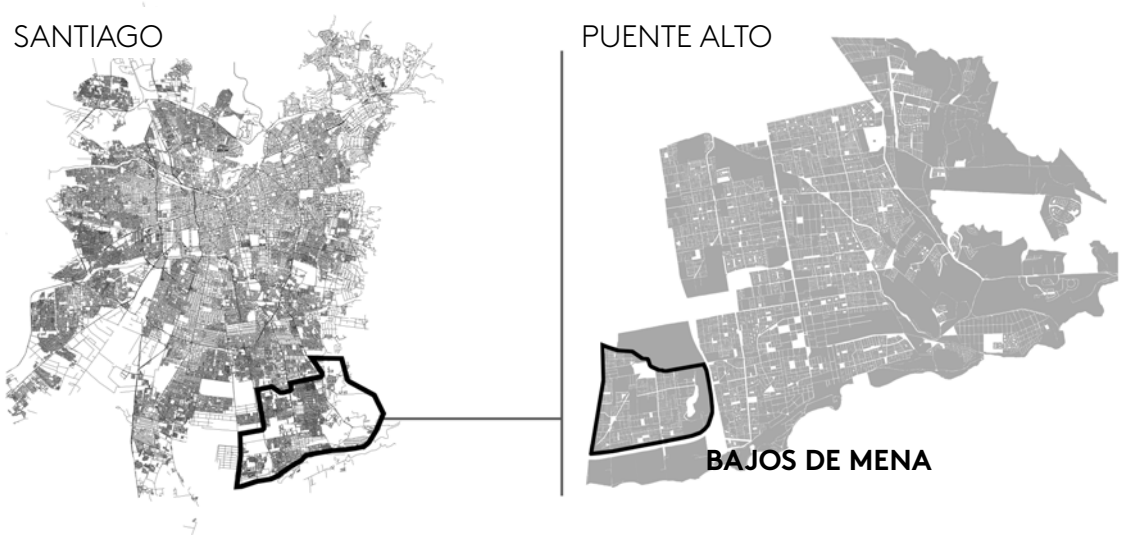
Over the last 30 years, housing policies in Chile have focused mainly on creating a solid housing finance system for reducing deficit, overlooking aspects of city production, location, quality of housing, strengthening social organisations and so on. However, there have been attempts to address these issues, particularly after the 2006 Housing Policy Reform. A series of programmes was launched looking for aspects of quality, integration, public space, participation, and location. At least in their narratives, these programmes sought to tackle inequality issues at different levels. This research examines two neighbourhoods built or impacted by such programmes, looking at whether housing is actually reducing inequalities at the different levels proposed, and assessing to what extent these new narratives are actually tackling inequalities in various ways.

BdM, a territory in the most populated district or *comuna* of Santiago, Puente Alto, was the terrain for this research. Over the last three decades, Puente Alto has witnessed the construction of massive social housing projects. BdM is an infamous area built in the 1990s that has been stigmatised since its early years. With an official population of 122,278 inhabitants, BdM is composed of 49 neighbourhoods (or *villas*) with different typologies and histories, but all of them share some commonalities: most of them were built by bringing families from different areas of the city without any previous connection or social links; most of them have high levels of density and physical

degradation; there is a lack of public spaces and in general of public services; there is very poor connectivity with the rest of the city; and there are high levels of violence, drug trafficking and stigmatisation.

The reasons why this research focuses on BdM are various. From a practical perspective, this is one of the few massive territories with a common identity in the city of Santiago that has witnessed the implementation of most housing policies and programmes from the 1990s onwards. In that sense, BdM can be considered as an urban and social laboratory, a *guinea pig* of the Chilean state, as most of the initiatives that the Ministry of Housing has put into practice have found in BdM a fertile territory for implementation. Then, it presents a sort of catalogue of housing interventions in terms of architectural typologies, institutional and social arrangements, financial models and programme designs. In methodological terms, this approach implies that all the cases can be located in a common territory, homogenising some of the variables and facilitating the research.

Figure 3.2 | Santiago, Puente Alto and Bajos de Mena



Source: Author

Additionally, BdM is a rich territory in which to observe different socioeconomic phenomena that are taking place in Chile more generally. BdM represents in a concentrated form most of the national problems in terms of economic, social and political inequality, increasing the political relevance of its study. It is a territory that even though it has been studied before, tends to be stigmatised, even being, somewhat

dramatically, called *the largest Ghetto of Chile* (Atisba, 2010). In a sense, BdM has mainly been studied from data at the macro macro scale, dismissing the diversity of phenomena it embraces.

Finally, the selection of BdM is also justified by its political and disciplinary relevance. This is particularly significant in a context in which many Latin American countries look at the Chilean model of housing production as a reference point in terms of achievements. So researching in depth both the urban project that housing policies have proposed and its consequences in terms of inequality becomes key, especially in the context of a significant territory – in terms of scale and visibility – such as BdM.

In terms of the programmes, there was a series of initial principles used in the selection of the policies observed. Table 3.2 shows the criteria used for the selection of programmes as well as the programmes and policies that were excluded from this research based on these criteria.

Table 3.2 | Criteria for the selection and inclusion of programmes and policies excluded

Criteria	Programmes excluded
Polices that were either designed or reformed after the 2006 New Housing Policy, as they explicitly introduced elements of urban equality as part of their narratives	Excludes programmes launched before 2006
Policies that addressed housing both in the private and public spheres	Excludes programmes focused exclusively on public spaces, as the Programa Quiero Mi Barrio (I Love My Neighbourhood Programme)
Policies with sufficient amount of their programme executed by 2014-2015	Excludes programmes such as the Rental subsidy, still implemented in isolated cases
Programmes, and not specific instruments of subsidy	Excludes subsidies to specific locations and subsidies for social integration as separate programmes, but not as instruments for wider programmes

Source: Author

Finally, as described in the introduction, the research focuses on two programmes: a programme of basic housing construction, *Fondo Solidario de Elección de Vivienda DS49* (Solidary found for housing choice; hereinafter, DS49); and a programme of demolishing and reconversion of neighbourhoods called *Programa de Regeneración de Condominios*

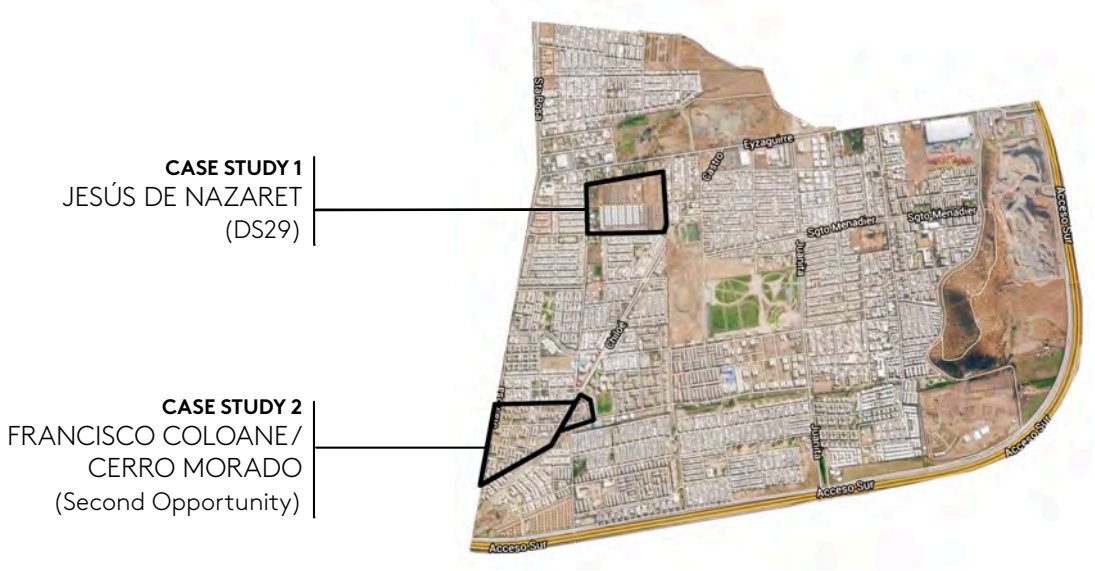
Sociales - Segunda Oportunidad, (Programme of regeneration of Social Condos; hereinafter, Second Opportunity).

The DS49 is the current version of the series of programmes for housing provision that have been responsible for most of the housing subsidised by the state for more than two decades. These programmes have had a variety of different procedurals structures, debt and requirements, but their basic aim has been to provide subsidies to people, while giving the responsibility of designing, building and managing houses to the private sector. Historically, the typical outcome of these policies has been the construction of socially and functionally homogenous neighbourhoods, with basic housing units on cheap and peripheral land. Over the years and particularly after 2006, some special subsidies complementary to the basic one have been implemented in order to reverse these dynamics. The subsidies include the special Location subsidy, Densification subsidy and Common Equipment subsidy. Additionally, there has been an increase in requirements in terms of housing size. With regard to the promotion of collective organisation, although over the last two decades there had been a trend towards strengthening collectiveness in the housing process, some transformations of the regulations in 2012 returned to the promotion of individual applications to housing subsidies (Cociña and Boano, 2013). The specific case that this research looks at is the neighbourhood called 'Jesús de Nazaret', a neighbourhood built during 2014-2015, bringing people from other neighbourhoods of BdM and Puente Alto.

The second programme this research focuses on is informally known as Second Opportunity. As a way to attack the processes of concentration of physical and social degradation, excessive violence and shortage of access to urban services in some neighbourhood, President Piñera's government implemented a programme of demolishing blocks located in Social Condos (CCSS). The programme works in specific areas where family groups living in the same building can voluntary organise and sell their units to the government, receiving a voucher to buy new houses. Because this is a voluntary process, the development of the empty plots after demolition is decided case by case, rather than being based on a plan. The definition of the destination of the removed families is not part of the programme either. This programme was implemented as a pilot

in four districts in the country during 2012-2015. The specific case that this research looked at were two adjacent neighbourhoods in BdM called 'Francisco Coloane' and 'Cerro Morado' that were part of the pilot programme.

Figure 3.3 | Location of Jesús de Nazaret and Francisco Coloane / Cerro Morado within BdM



Source: Author

In addition to DS49 and Second Opportunity there were two public programmes that, even though they were not core case studies for the reasons explained above, were initially considered as *background cases*, and were also examined during the research process. Even though they were not analysed using the same lenses and criteria, they were seen as important in understanding the context, the problematics of the case and the challenges of the policies more generally. These two cases were the *Programa Quiero Mi Barrio* (I Love my neighbourhood; hereinafter, PQMB); and the *Plan Integral Bajos de Mena* (Integral Plan of BdM; hereinafter, Integral Plan). As we will discuss later, these programmes were initially seen as background cases, as they are not considered strictly as *housing* programmes by the government. However, in researching them, they became key to understanding and defining the potentials of housing as urbanism, incorporating some of the necessary elements to complement the discussion about housing in its multidimensional nature.

The PQMB emerged in 2006 as a way of dealing with the challenges of the poor quality of neighbourhoods, particularly those produced through the process of housing formalisation during recent decades; the new National Housing Policy implemented in 2006 during President Bachelet's government, clearly introduced the idea of the qualitative deficit, and as part of it the PQMB aimed to "contribute to improving the conditions under which neighbourhood life is developed" (MINVU, 2011). In the case of BdM, the PQMB has involved two kinds of interventions: specific interventions in some neighbourhoods through the regular programme, focused on public spaces and infrastructure improvements; and one major intervention in the context of a sub-programme called Emblematic Neighbourhoods that intervened in larger areas with a bigger budget. In the context of this Emblematic Neighbourhoods programme, a series of interventions has taken place in BdM, probably the most significant being the construction of a new park, built where there used to be a rubbish dump.

The second background case is the Integral Plan of BdM, which started in 2014 with the designation of a 'presidential delegate' in charge of developing a plan for intervening in the whole area of BdM, putting together a number of efforts from different ministries and authorities in regenerating the area. The presidential delegate is supposed to engage with the different neighbourhoods and authorities, addressing a variety of topics. This is an ambitious plan that includes multiple dimensions and resources, and it is supposed to take care of the hitherto unresolved issues of the area.

Figure 3.4 | Diagram: Case studies and urban cases

Source: Author

3.2.2 Methods of data collection and analysis

This section explains in detail the different methods used for this research. As has been explained, the core of this research is the analysis of two neighbourhoods that have been impacted by two different programmes, and the study of the territory on a wider urban scale, using two other cases seen initially as background. Each neighbourhood is analysed in terms of the impacts of the programmes on reducing inequalities. Following the discussion about the position of this research as being concerned with the process of balancing knowledge by value-rationality, the main focus has been on looking for different voices to understand the power and spatial dynamics behind each of the programmes in the territory, and the way in which lived inequalities are displayed in the territory in everyday life. This focus serves to bring to light the economic, social and political logics that housing policies are triggering.

The first phase of the work focused on literature revision and theoretical discussion, followed by a revision of secondary sources for the study of the historical context of both the policies researched. The empirical work of the research was conducted during two fieldwork studies in Santiago, one between November 2014 and January 2015, and the other between May and June 2015. Both studies combined quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting data.

The fieldwork in the city of Santiago consisted mainly in a combination of four kinds of activities: firstly, site visits to BdM, where interviews, mapping and participatory observations were conducted; secondly, meetings with different authorities and professionals from public and academic institutions, both at the local and national level; thirdly, attendance to official activities related to the programmes in BdM, conducted both in the territory and in other public buildings; and finally, the collection of secondary data from public institutions and from the GIS archives of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, from the Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez[2].

[2] In the context of this research, an agreement was signed with the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, from the Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez to access their GIS archives for academic proposes.

a. Setting the context

An initial series of activities was conducted to set the context at the territory and institutional level. Three kinds of activities were developed for this purpose:

1. Revision of historical literature and official documents;
2. Secondary data on physical, economic and social conditions of the area;
3. Interviews:
    a. with authorities and academics about housing policies in Chile;
    b. with authorities and policy makers about Second Opportunity;
    c. with authorities and policy makers about DS49;
    d. with authorities and policy makers about PQMB;
    e. with authorities and policy makers about the Integral Plan;
    f. with local authorities;
    g. with practitioners working in the territory.

b. Case studies and background cases

For the empirical research, the approach was to use the theoretical lenses described in Chapter 2 as the entry points of analysis, as summarised in general terms in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5 | Lenses of analysis and general methods

INEQUALITIES	LENSES	CRITERIA	METHODS
ECONOMIC [resources]	*Housing as a productivity trigger and asset*	**Analysis of investment, property value and economic activities**	Secondary data: Analysis of Market Prices Secondary data: Analysis of Public investment Interviews with authorities and practitioners Interviews with community leaders Walks and storytelling with neighbourhood dwellers
SOCIAL [services/ rights]	*Housing as a platform to the city at multiple scales*	**Analysis of access to services, location and design of houses**	Secondary data: Analysis of location and services Secondary data: Analysis of housing design Spatial mapping Interviews with authorities and practitioners Interviews with community leaders Walks and storytelling with neighbourhood dwellers Participatory observation of community meetings
POLITICAL [power]	*Housing as a collective and multidimensional process*	**Analysis of social and political organisation, democratic and conflictive nature of processes**	Interviews with authorities and practitioners Interviews with community leaders Walks and storytelling with neighbourhood dwellers Participatory observation of community meetings

Source: Author

The various methods referred to in Figure 3.5 can be summarised as follows:

Interviews with authorities and practitioners: In order to understand the dynamics of the programmes, the decision making behind the programmes' design and implementation, the evaluation by the authorities of the programmes' execution, and the main achievements, challenges and obstacles they observed, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with authorities, with policy makers, and with professionals and practitioners working directly in the programmes and the territory. Some authorities and practitioners were interviewed more than once (in 2014 and in 2015) in order to follow up their observations and concerns. Some interviews were conducted in government offices (Ministries, Metropolitan departments, the Municipality) while others took place in a community centre in BdM. All of the interviewees were formally informed of the aim of the interviews. In terms of anonymity, official authorities are identified by their names and/or in terms of their formal position in government, while practitioners and professionals are kept anonymous and just identified by the programme, department or institution with which they work.

Interviews with community leaders: Semi-structured interviews with community leaders were at the core of the empirical research, and provided most of the information for the different lenses proposed. These interviews were used to enquire about the dynamics of the programmes, as well as to understand in detail the history of their local implementation, combining appreciations of the personal stories of the interviewees with how they relate to the wider processes of change linked to the programmes' implementation. These interviews also provided a gateway to understand the dynamics of the neighbourhood, everyday life and lived inequality, and to establish contact with other neighbourhood dwellers. Given the delicate situation in the neighbourhoods in terms of violence and distrust, this was a particularly key point. Some of the interviews were conducted in community centres, while others took place in the houses of the community leaders, some lasting for several hours. All the interviewees were formally informed of the aim of the interviews. All of them are kept anonymous for the purpose of this research, and just identified on the basis of their gender and neighbourhood in which they live.

Walks and storytelling with neighbourhood dwellers: Conversations with neighbours were an important source of information, conducted informally in exchanges and storytelling during walks in the neighbourhoods. These conversations promoted understanding of the specific and personal dynamics related to the implementation of the programmes. The walks were always accompanied by one of the community leaders or government professionals working in the area. All of the interviewees were formally informed of the aim of the interviews. All of them are kept anonymous for the purpose of this research, and just identified by their gender and the neighbourhood in which they live.

Participatory observation of community meetings and events: During the fieldwork a series of events and community meetings took place. Assisting and participating in those meetings provided an important insight into the dynamics of the programmes, the way they were perceived and the consequences they had for the territory. These events included, for example: municipal meetings with communities; information meetings regarding the housing delivery process; official participatory workshops in BdM; attendance to demolitions and the process of vacating buildings; attendance to the formal handing over of keys and occupation of new houses.

Secondary data: Analysis of market prices, public investment, housing design, location and services: An important part of the fieldwork was having direct access to secondary data, from the government, the municipality and academic institutions. This secondary data included general information about the territory and its socioeconomic profile, and more importantly, specific information about the programmes researched including: financial information about the subsidies provided, e.g. details about numbers, address, purpose, etc.; official information about the legal documents and regulation of the programmes; official and internal documents about the programmes; physical layout and design of projects developed under the programmes; information collected by the programmes in the territory during an internal census; land and real estate values of houses as stated in local media. All the information providers were formally informed that the information was being collected for academic purposes.

A total of 24 interviews were conducted with authorities and practitioners, 18 long interviews with community leaders, and 12 participatory observations of events such as official community meetings or government workshops. In addition, walks and informal conversation took place constantly during the fieldwork periods. The specific use of each of these data collection tools for each of the programmes is summarised in Figure 3.6. In addition to the economic, social, and political lenses, there is a transversal lens related to space that is used as a general approach to understand each of the cases.

Figure 3.6 | Methods of data collection for each case

CASE STUDIES

1 | DS49 | Jesús de Nazaret

ECONOMIC [resources]	**SOCIAL** [services/rights]	**POLITICAL** [power]
- Analysis of market prices of houses; - Analysis of subsidies and public investment; - Interviews with authorities and professionals of MINVU and SERVIU; - Mapping of economic activities; - Interviews with community leaders; - Walks and storytelling with neighbourhood dwellers.	- Analysis of old and new locations; - Analysis of housing design; - Interviews with authorities and professionals of MINVU and SERVIU; - Interviews with community leaders; - Walks and storytelling with dwellers. - Participatory observation in community meetings in municipality and events relating to handover of houses.	- Interviews with authorities and professionals of MINVU and SERVIU; - Interviews with community leaders; - Walks and storytelling with dwellers. - Participatory observation in community meetings in municipality and handover of houses event.

SPACE LENS: *Physical Mapping, photographies, walks.*

2 | Second Opportunity | Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado

ECONOMIC [resources]	**SOCIAL** [services/rights]	**POLITICAL** [power]
- Analysis of market prices of houses in the area; - Analysis of subsidies and public investment; - Interviews with authorities and professionals of MINVU and SERVIU; - Interviews with community leaders; - Walks and storytelling with neighbourhood dwellers.	- Analysis of old and new locations; - Analysis of urban design of interventions; - Interviews with authorities and professionals of MINVU and SERVIU; - Interviews with community leaders; - Walks and storytelling with dwellers. - Participatory observation in demolitions, vacancy of buildings and attendance to public meetings.	- Interviews with authorities and professionals of MINVU and SERVIU; - Interviews with community leaders; - Walks and storytelling with dwellers. - Participatory observation in demolitions, vacancy of buildings and office of public attendance.

SPACE LENS: *Physical Mapping, photographies, walks.*

PQMB	**INTEGRAL PLAN BdM**
- Analysis of investment and interventions in the area; - Interviews with authorities and programme practitioners, from the MINVU, SEREMI, and the municipality.	- Analysis of investment and interventions in the area; - Interviews with authorities and programme practitioners, from the SERVIU and the Integral Plan Office. - Participatory observation in official participatory workshops.

Source: Author

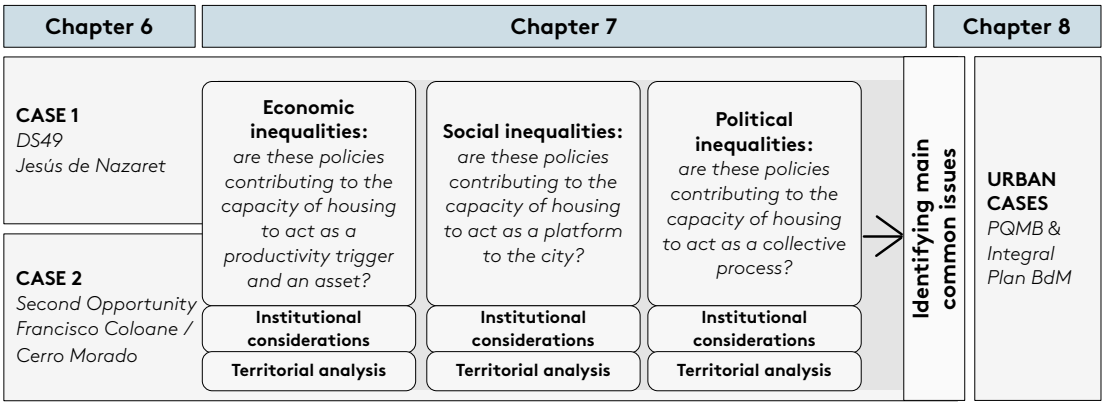
c. Data analysis methodology

Chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation present the analysis of the historical, institutional and territorial context. The next three chapters present analysis of the empirical data collected by the methods described above, Chapter 6 focusing on the implementation of the programmes, Chapter 7 on their impact, and Chapter 8 on the background cases. This methodological discussion finishes by briefly introducing the ways in which the data collected is analysed in these three chapters.

The main purpose of these chapters is to use the evidence collected to address the questions that form the basis of this research, and to build a body of knowledge to explore the arguments proposed. In that sense, there has been a constant effort to be clear about the triangular relationship between the questions, the argument, and the methods used, linking the last directly with the theoretical lenses. While Chapter 6 presents the information for each of the two cases separately, Chapter 7 is structured on the basis of the topics or theoretical lenses proposed. For each topic (economic, social and political inequalities), the evidence is analysed in such a way as to find out relevant issues, addressing issues of segregation, violence and marginality, among others. Through these issues, it seeks to understand the effects of housing programmes in BdM, and the reflection goes beyond the specificities of the territory, thus contributing to the discussion at national and regional levels.

The analysis of the data seeks to address the questions and sub-questions, and in sum to understand both the main obstacles and the successful elements of these policies, as well as the main challenges of housing policies in reducing multiple inequalities. The common elements identified are used as the lens to study the urban cases in Chapter 8, as summarised in Figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7 | Structure of analysis by chapter



Source: Author

Final comments

This research focuses on studying a spectrum of interventions in a limited territory, examining to what extent they are conducive to reducing quantitative and qualitative inequalities. The analysis attempts to explore the main argument of this research: that those interventions that are more complex and multiple in their approach to housing have more impact in improving redistribution and qualitative inequalities, which are necessary to sustain and deepen redistribution processes. To do so, this research uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, as has been examined in this chapter.

As has been discussed, the normative position of this work presents by itself a theoretical and political hypothesis; this implies that the research has aimed to observe a series of phenomena to identify if something that we define as desirable is taking place. Rather than going to the field to prove or demonstrate a fixed hypothesis, the methodological approach set the tools to interrogate a territory and a series of policies, to understand the cracks in which housing policies are or could be instruments for the reduction of inequalities. In that sense, it is the purpose of this research to approach value-rational questions, placing power dynamics and political and spatial dynamics at the centre of the housing question. The methods selected have focused on understanding different voices in the process, giving account of such an approach.

CHAPTER 4

Setting the Context: Inequalities and Housing Policies in Chile

Introduction

This chapter describes the institutional and historical context in which this research took place. In so doing, it seeks to offer some reflections on why it is relevant and pertinent to research the relationship between housing policies and inequalities in the current Chilean context, reflecting on the one hand on inequality trends, and on the other on the trajectories of housing policies and their approaches to urban equality.

A first reason to focus on inequality in Chile relates to the fact that, as will be discussed, inequality indices in Chile are one of the highest in the region, representing one of the main national shortcomings, not just in terms of income redistribution, but also in relation to social, cultural and political disparities. Over the last few years, however, and after decades of consolidation of inequalities, there have been some reductions in income maldistribution. This opens important challenges for reducing qualitative inequalities, and particularly for increasing the redistributive impact of state action, which remains very low by international standards (Joumard et al., 2012).

The second reason relates to the trajectory of housing policies. For the last three decades, housing policies in Chile have focused mainly on creating a solid finance system for reducing quantitative deficit, overlooking aspects of city production, location, quality of housing, strengthening social organisation and so on. However, over the last decade, particularly since the 2006 National Housing Policy reform, there have been attempts to tackle qualitative deficits and urban inequalities. A series of programmes looking at aspects of quality, public space, participation, and location was launched. At least in their narratives, these programmes seek to take care of urban inequality issues at different

levels. In a context where the ideas of urban equality and integration have become mainstream in the official narrative, exploring the extent to which these programmes are actually reducing inequalities from the multiple perspectives proposed becomes relevant.

There is a third reason why studying the intersection between inequality and housing policies in Chile is pertinent. Both in terms of macroeconomic management and in relation to housing policies, the Chilean model has been seen as a successful approach given its quantitative achievements, particularly for the Latin American region. So it is very important to explore with rigour the relationship between Chilean housing policies and urban inequality, placing them in a wider context, and enriching and contributing to the regional discussion about housing production.

This chapter discusses these issues by setting the institutional and historical context, and it is organised in two main sections: one about inequalities in Chile and the role of the state; and the other about the history of housing policies. For both topics, there is an emphasis on understanding why the current context is pertinent for this study.

4.1 Why inequalities in Chile?

We have discussed in Chapter 2 why inequalities are the focus of this research, examining three main features: historical trends and the role of social arrangements behind the deepening of inequalities; the complicated relationship between inequality and poverty; and the tensions between wealth and income inequalities on the one hand and the role of housing on the other. In this section we want to discuss why it is relevant and pertinent to research inequalities from the housing perspective, particularly in the Chilean context. To do so, the Chapter briefly reviews the history of inequality and places the current debates in this context, and then it goes on to discuss more specifically the role of the state and social policies in the Chilean context. In so doing, it seeks to underline the relevance and urgency of tackling inequalities in a country in which data and statistics indicating success have obscured the reality of the lives of the majority of people, who do not necessarily see the benefits of gross economic progress.

4.1.1 Inequality in Chile: A revision of the context

Historically, from the colonial period onwards, inequality has been a major issue in Chile. However, if we look more closely at the trends of the last century, the trajectories of income distribution have varied over time. There are two particularly notable periods in this regard. Firstly, between 1930 and 1973, which is recognised as the period of the expansion of the middle class and the welfare state, the Gini index was reduced by 10% (Larrañaga, 2016). By contrast, the period initiated by the dictatorship that took place between 1973 and 1990 – which implemented what has been called the 'liberal revolution' – triggered a decisive shift in the previous trend of inequality reduction, mainly resulting from contractive adjustment policies that reduced wages, employment and pensions:

> Inequality increased as a result of the recessive adjustments that caused unemployment and a drop in incomes, given the privatisation of public enterprises – which became the property of a small number of economic groups – the suppression and repression of unions, and the conversion from a welfare state to one with a residual character, which concentrates its work in alleviating poverty (Larrañaga, 2016:2).

These structural transformations and their impact in terms of inequality have had long-term effects, particularly considering that the economic model implemented during the dictatorship remained practically untouched during the following 25 years. In part, this is a result of the fact that such a model "proved to be effective in creating the major growth cycle of history, and in contributing decisively to the reduction of poverty to a quarter of its initial level" (Larrañaga, 2016:62-63).

However, even though for decades it was poverty alleviation that occupied the prime position in social debates, inequality has become a major political and social matter, and almost any public debate nowadays gives some attention to it. In terms of income inequality, the current numbers are clear-cut:

> a recent study on tax returns (López, Figueroa and Gutiérrez, 2013) shows that the top 1% is able to appropriate in a centre-left democracy about one third of all income (32.8%); with the top 0.1% getting one-fifth (19.9%), and the top 0.01%, corresponding to individuals belonging to about only 300 families, getting more than one-tenth (11.5%) of the total (Palma, 2014:5).

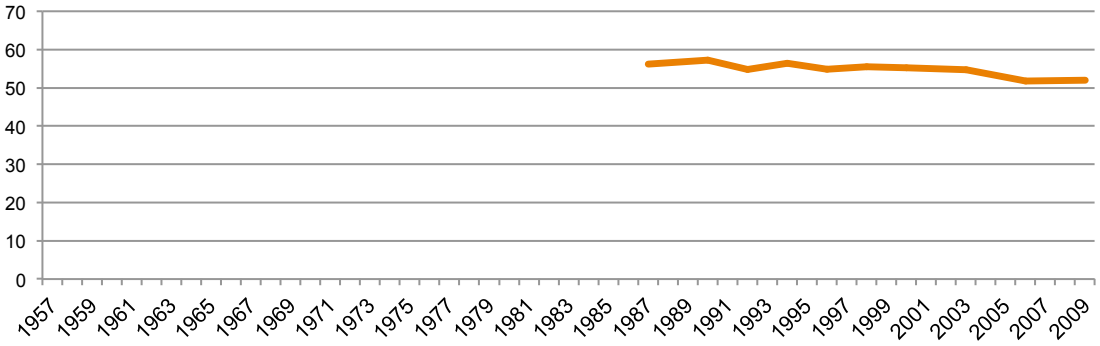
Despite the dramatic numbers that put inequality in Chile as one of the highest in Latin America and the OECD countries (OECD, 2012b), looking at economic debates suggests that inequality is still a secondary concern compared with efficiency or growth (López et al., 2013).

As mentioned earlier, and looking at the historical data, it seems as if there has been a small decrease of inequality as measured by the Gini index during the last 20 years (Figure 4.1). This is mainly due to the fact that the starting point is very high (OECD, 2011). However, alternative ways of measuring inequality, for example the Palma ratio shown in Figure 4.2, show a different reality. The Palma ratio or proportion has been acknowledged as more sensitive than the Gini both to the tails of the distribution and to high levels of inequality (Cobham and Sumner, 2013; Cobham et al., 2015), as it is basically determined by the ratio between the richest 10% and the poorest 40% of the population. This is based on observations made by Palma about the fact that the remaining 50% of the population generally take approximately 50 per cent of gross national income (Palma, 2006). If we look at historical data for the Palma ratio going back to 1957, it seems that, with the exception of the dramatic increase and decrease experienced during the late 1980s, more recent measures (3.63 in 2009) are higher than in 1992 (3.48). A similar conclusion emerges from looking at the distribution of income by decile (Figure 4.3) for the same period, showing that in practice the richest decile has increased its share during the 52-year period from 1957 to 2009.

The failure to reduce inequalities is, in contrast with the achievements of poverty reduction, undeniable. This polarity is at the heart of the issue addressed in this research: while poverty and housing deficit have decreased at similar rates, inequality remains very high. Economic, social and political inequalities interact and reinforce each other and must be understood systemically. This multiplicity of dimensions has been slowly acknowledged by public spheres, for according to the Chilean sociologist Pedro Güell, the debate and demands in Chile in recent years have shown a double displacement: "from income growth or poverty alleviation to equality; and from economic equality to socio-political equality" (Güell, 2013:1). As this shift in the discussion has taken place,

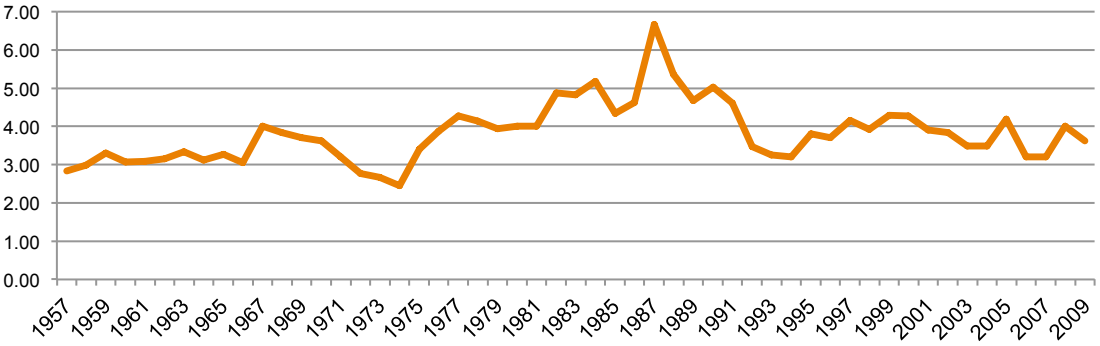
measurements such as the Human Development Index, or multidimensional measurement of poverty have become more relevant.

Figure 4.1 | Gini Index in Chile 1987-2009



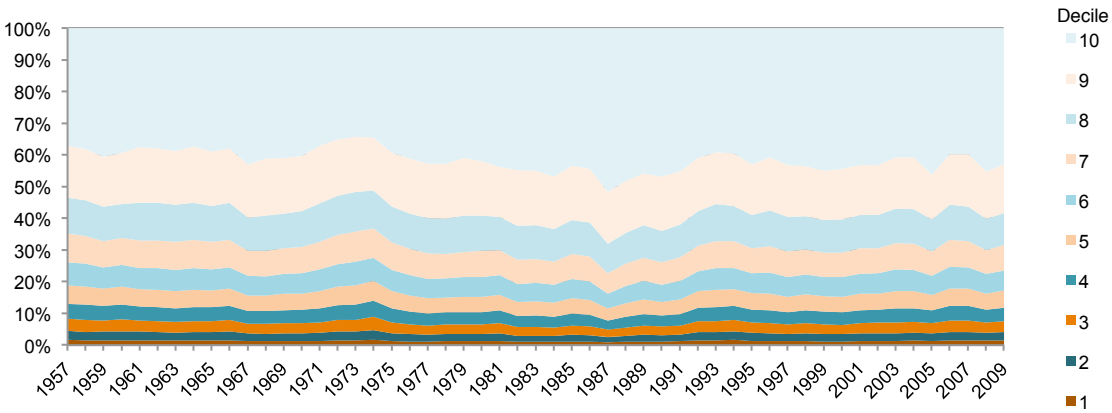
Source: Author based on data from the World Bank (n.d)

Figure 4.2 | Palma ratio in Chile 1957-2009



Source: Author based on data provided by José Gabriel Palma

Figure 4.3 | Income distribution by decile in Chile 1957-2009

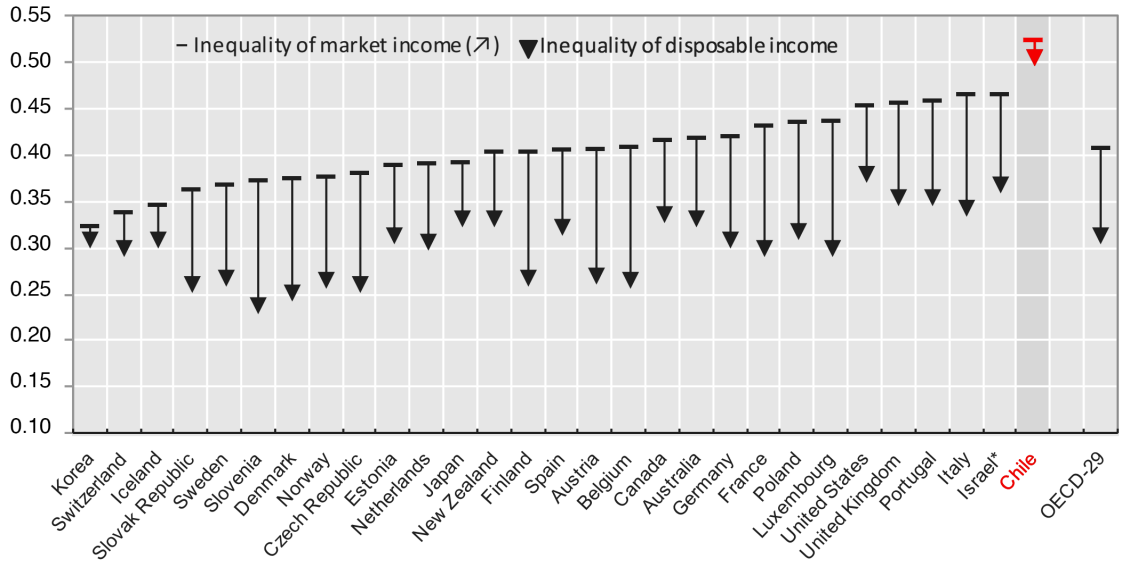


Source: Author based on data provided by José Gabriel Palma

4.1.2 The role of the state and social policies

Shrinking inequalities depends on the political and economic arrangements that societies make, and "on the institutions and policies that societies choose to adopt" (Piketty and Saez, 2014:843). In that sense, the role of the state in this task cannot be replaced. According to data from the OECD (2011), the redistributive impact of household taxes and transfers put Chile as one of the more unequal countries within the members of that organisation. In other words, after the redistributive action of the state, Chilean society is not able to significantly reduce inequality, as the redistributive impact of state action is very minimal. An OECD document concludes that market incomes are distributed more unequally than household net incomes, as taxes and benefits reduce inequality by a quarter. This is true as an average for the organisation's members, but, as shown in Figure 4.4, it is very far from true in the case of Chile.

Figure 4.4 | Gini index before and after State redistribution action: Market incomes are distributed more unequally than net incomes



Source: OECD (2011); modified by author

This suggests important challenges for public policies that have a potentially distributive role. As discussed in Chapter 2, income and wealth inequality should be regarded as different, the latter being very relevant in traditional patrimonial societies such as Chile, where the top shares of income and wealth tend to be less correlated. Housing is very relevant for this discussion as it is far and away the main capital good that families have

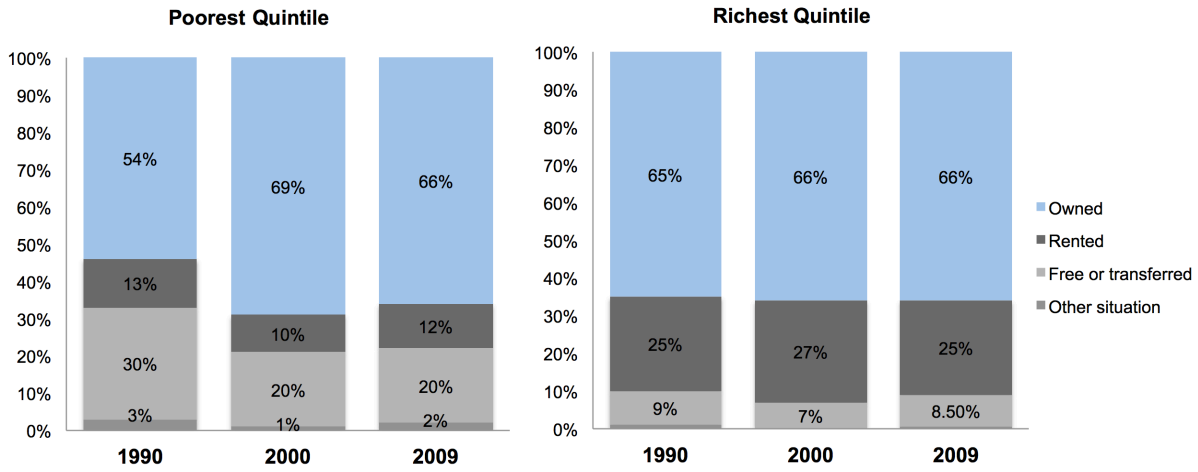
access to (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014), particularly in countries with high rates of home ownership. In the case of Chile, by 2002 just 17.7% of the population inhabited rented houses, meaning that for most of the population private houses are actually an asset (see Table 4.1). This percentage is even bigger if we look at the poorest groups, as shown in Figure 4.5: by 2009, only 12% of the poorest quintile inhabits rented houses, while 25% of the richest quintile does it (Datavoz, 2009).

Table 4.1 | Number of occupied houses, according to housing tenure

TOTAL	Owner (fully paid)	Owner (still paying)	Tenants	Transferred for work or service	Free
3,899,448	2,059,288	767,911	688,610	184,587	199,052
100%	52.8%	19.7%	17.7%	4.7%	5.1%

Source: Data from INE (2002)

Figure 4.5 | Houses inhabited by owners vs. tenants



Source: Adapted by author from Datavoz (2009)

The challenges for the state in terms of distribution are massive, and housing production is key in such a task, not just because of its potential for redistributing wealth and triggering processes of social and political change, but also for its potential territorial impact. Previous research has shown that the impacts of the reduction of poverty and inequality are distributed in a very uneven way in the territory, with regions at macro and micro scale witnessing very different changes in wellbeing during the *golden years* of the Chilean economy in the 1990s (Modrego et al., 2009).

The failure of redistributive efforts during recent decades, the need for inclusion of social and political inequality as part of the wider challenges of redistribution, the enormous scope for increasing the effects of state action and social policies in this field, the importance of housing for wealth distribution, and the challenges in terms of territorial and spatial inequalities described in this section, all give an idea of why it is relevant to study inequality in Chile from different standpoints. We are at a historical moment at which exploration of housing policies seems to be a particularly fertile terrain to explore.

4.2 Housing policies: A historical review

This section presents the historical background and the main shifts in terms of approaches to housing in Chile, as well as their relationship with international debates about development and poverty, in order to understand current housing policies and debates. The transformations of housing policies and the evolution of practices and ideas in the Latin American context present some similar trends across different countries, but there are also specificities and particularities. It is possible to encounter differences and commonalities over the years in the approaches to poverty and informality, and in the role played by design, architecture, central governments and residents (Fiori and Brandão, 2010). So in presenting the evolution of ideas in the Chilean context, we are also seeking to discuss phenomena that have taken place in a regional and international context.

After reviewing the historical trends, this section focuses on how recent critics and debates have led to a shift in the narratives behind housing policies, as post-2006 housing policies have had a strong focus on urban inequalities. It is because of this shift of narratives that exploring the actual impact of post-2006 policies in terms of inequalities reduction becomes pertinent.

4.2.1 Historical background

The history of housing policies in Chile extends back more than 100 years, comprising a remarkable variety of different approaches to housing over the last century (Castillo Couve and Hidalgo, 2007, Hidalgo, 1999). The ‘Workers’ Housing Law’ of 1906 was

the first institutional attempt to face a growing problem. Before that law, most of the answers to housing question had been implemented by charity organisation, mainly associated with Catholic groups (Hidalgo et al., 2005). But as the pressure for housing solutions and the urban population kept growing, these solutions became insufficient. In 1905 the Archbishop of Santiago said in a letter to the Minister of Finance that 'charity makes miracles', but by 1914 the same Archbishop was saying '*la caridad no da abasto'*, meaning that charity cannot cope, and is not enough for solving housing problems (Salazar, 2009).

As with most housing policies at that time, the efforts made by the state before the 1940s were never enough, and even though some interesting first attempts at collective housing and urbanisation took place (MINVU, 2014a), the scale and scope of these interventions were far from the scale of the needs. During the first half of the 20th century, the urban population increased so fast that any official or unofficial effort was insufficient. By the 1930s the urban population in Chile was more than 50% (and today it is nearly 90%). This was mainly due to a phenomenon observed all over Latin America of "accelerated mass migration of labourers from rural areas to major cities" (Hernández and Kellett, 2010:5). As with anywhere else, the Chilean state was trying to face a very old and unresolved challenge: "how to provide urgent solutions to the often desperate housing needs of the poor, creating at the same time conditions that might, in the long term, help to change the social context from which those needs originate – or at least not to contribute to consolidation of that context" (Fiori and Ramírez, 1992:23).

From the 1940s the first attempts to modernise the state under the *Popular Front* governments initiated a process of industrialisation, increasing the state apparatus, and introducing programmes and institutions for the promotion of productivity and development. In this context, a shift in the understanding of housing took place, leading to it gradually becoming a truly public problem:

> From the 1940s the dominant idea in Chilean society is that the right to housing, and to education and health, ought to be guaranteed by the state for that group of the population who, because of their low incomes, is unable to resolve their problems on their own (Moffat, in Gilbert, 2002:310).

The tradition initiated during those decades of providing solutions for the poor became a solid pillar for housing policies in the future, even after the implementation of the neoliberal reforms during Pinochet's dictatorship, which shifted the mechanism towards the provision of subsidies, but not involving the active responsibility of the state in this matter (Moffat, 2002; Gilbert, 2002; Richards, 1995).

Despite official attempts, urban growth and the pressure for housing solutions kept growing, leading to the informal settlements' dwellers (*pobladores)* to set organisations looking for alternative solutions, particularly after the 1950s. De Ramón (1990) makes the distinction that while between 1830 and 1940 the predominant set up of housing solutions for the poor where given by legal forms such as tenancies, between 1950 and 1970 illegal occupations became more frequent. By 1957, in Santiago alone there were more than 40 informal settlements, called '*campamentos'* or '*poblaciones callampa*' (Garcés, 2002). Also in 1957 the largest organised occupation of land in Latin America at that time took place. It was called *La Victoria* (The Victory) and involved over 1,200 families coming one night from a slum by the side of a canal and occupying a plot of land in order to establish a legal presence there. By 1972, an official cadastre would count 257 slums surrounding Santiago, with 83,000 families and around 456,500 people, meaning that one out of six inhabitants of Santiago where slum dwellers (De Ramón, 1990).

Campamentos became relevant not just because of their massive scale, but also because *pobladores* became key political actors in the process of social and political transformation that the country faced particularly after the 1960s, and that culminated in the election of the socialist president Salvador Allende in 1970. *Pobladores,* despite their relatively marginal position in the city, occupied a central position in the political scene during these years, playing a transformative role in the polarised political scenario of the early 1970s, collaborating particularly closely with left-wing parties at the time. Many of the social and political innovations that Allendes' political programme proposed were materialised in *campamentos*, for example experiences of self-managed justice (Fiori, 1973). As Manuel Castells observed at the time, "one of the most particular aspects of the

class struggle in Chile is the importance, particularly during recent years, of the *pobladores* movement" (Castells, 1973:9).

Most of the time the life conditions of *campamentos* were very miserable, with no access to basic services such as water and sanitation, and very precarious infrastructure, located sometimes in vulnerable areas such as canal banks (De Ramón, 1990; Garcés, 2002). One of the most emblematic *campamentos* was located along the *Zanjón de la Aguada,* a dirty water channel or ditch that crosses Santiago from east to west and occupied by more than 35,000 individuals for a length of 5km (Garcés, 2002). Life in *Zanjón de la Aguada* is keenly portrayed by the Chilean writer Pedro Lemebel, who describes the emergence of the *campamento* as follows:

> Surely it was incomparable with any old land invasion, slum, or vulgar settlement in the outskirts of Santiago today. But *el Zanjón*, more than just a myth of urban sociology, was the alley next to the fateful canal that carried the same name. It was on the banks of a swamp, where since the late forties a few tables, some corrugated iron roofs and chipboard walls were installed, and from one day to the next the houses were ready. (…) And, as always, housing was something of an adventure, even more so at that time, when entire families migrated from north and south to the capital, looking for new horizons, trying to find a few feet of land to plant their guests' flags. (Lemebel, 2003:13-14)[3].

While the *pobladores* movement increased in size and political relevance, there were also institutional responses both from the private and public sector, as during this period two key institutions were established that continue to play a role even today. From the private sector, the Chilean Chamber of Construction (CChC) was created in 1951. The CChC's role was (and still is) mainly to look after private interests in the construction sector, having a key role in the decades that followed in shaping and enlarging the role of the private sector in housing production. In the public sector, under the first government of the Christian Democrats, the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism (MINVU) was created

[3] Translation by Thomas Aston; original text in Spanish: "Seguramente incomparable con cualquier toma de terrenos campamento o población picante de los alrededores del actual Gran Santiago. Pero el Zanjón, más que ser un mito de la sociología poblacional, fue un callejón aledaño al fatídico canal que lleva el mismo nombre. Una rivera de ciénaga donde a fines de los años cuarenta se fueron instalando unas tablas, unas fonolas, unos cartones, y de un día para otro las viviendas estaban listas. (…)
Y como siempre el asunto de la vivienda ha sido una excursión aventurera para los desposeídos, aun más en ese tiempo, cuando emigraban familias enteras desde el norte y sur del país hasta la capital en busca de mejores horizontes, tratando de encontrar un pedazo de suelo donde plantar sus banderas de allegados."

in 1965, as a specific government department in charge of housing policies, and coordinating the different institutions involved in housing production (Hidalgo, 1999, 2004).

The ever-growing demand for housing and a highly polarised political context characterised the early 1970s. With the establishment of the MINVU, different approaches to low cost housing production took place during the late 1960s and early 1970s, including massive modern estates, distribution of plots of land in peripheral areas, regularisation of informal occupations, and so on. These approaches were aligned with some of the international trends in terms of approaches to housing at the time. A combination of traditional modernist approaches led by public institutions such as the CORMU and CORVI with some of the most innovative experience in terms of self-help took place for more than 15 years, combining what could be called conventional and non-conventional housing polices in order to alleviate poverty (Ramírez, 2002).

In a context of social movements having increased influence (Castells, 1973; de Ramón, 1990; Hidalgo, 2004), one of the most emblematic strategies implemented by the authorities at that time was called '*Operación Sitio'* (Site Operation), nicknamed 'Chalk Operation' as it consisted mainly in marking land with chalk and distributing plots to urban dwellers. The Chalk Operation became the largest strategy implemented by the Ministry at that time: between 1965 and 1970, it provided around 71,000 solutions nationwide, 51,881 of which (71.6%) were in Santiago (Hidalgo, 2004:220). Parallel to massive-scale solutions like the Chalk Operation, other interesting self-help housing projects led by local governments, such as the Villa La Reina neighbourhood, took place (Quintana, 2014).

The strong emphasis on self-help housing was undoubtedly influenced by the contemporary ideas of John Turner, whose study of Latin American housing production had been widely read. According to Jirón (2010b), the magnitude of the social struggles of the Chilean experience encouraged many authors at the time to study and write about social movements, including Manuel Castells (1983) and his emblematic *'The City and the Grassroots'*, as he had studied the Chilean movements during the vibrant early 1970s.

However, there was no shortage of criticism of these *pobladores*-led programmes, and some programmes of serial housing production were implemented as well. One of them was the Plan 20,000/70, whose name was taken from the goal of building 20,000 industrialised housing units by 1970, linked to 'Housing Popular Factories' (Hidalgo, 2004:222). When Allendes' socialist government came in in 1970, most of these strategies were deepened and expanded. One example was the implementation of local factories for the production of Soviet panels known as 'KDP', and the construction of thousands of industrially produced units a year using this system (Alonso and Palmarola, 2014).

The combination of these strategies, however, was not able to meet the scale of the challenges. However they were measured, the goals set by governments were not achieved, and the solutions deployed always seemed insufficient (Hidalgo, 2004; Gilbert, 2004). Most of these social trajectories and public strategies, as we will see, were dramatically interrupted after the 1973 coup.

4.2.2 Structural transformation of the 1970s and 1980s: A capital housing subsidy model

It is impossible to understand the scope of the transformations that took place in housing policies in the late 1970s and 1980s without grasping the deep socio-political and economic transformation that took place in Chile during the violent period after the 1973 coup and during the following 17 years of military dictatorship led by Pinochet. During this period, the implementation of a neoliberal model and a diminished role for the state completely shifted the role of socioeconomic policies. The Chilean neoliberal experiment has been recognised as one of the first implementations of the principles that were going to rule upcoming reforms in the rest of the world, led mainly by Reagan and Thatcher (Harvey, 2005).

As has been widely studied, during the 1980s and 1990s most nations adopted economic adjustments to adapt themselves to the requirement of international organisations such as the IMF and World Bank (Mohan, 1996; Mkandawire, 2005). In the case of Chile, however, rather than being a follow-up of the Washington Consensus, these

transformations were part of a very particular project, in which internal and international forces – mainly from the USA in the context of the Cold War – shaped a series of socioeconomic arrangements in the early 1970s that redesigned policies and the role of State: "Rather than structural adjustment, the military regime which ruled Chile from 1973 to 1989 carried out a complete structural transformation of the country. Moreover, it was a process which began without pressure from the IMF or the World Bank" (Richards, 1995:515). According to Gilbert (2002), these arrangements have much more to do with the Chicago School of Economics and its influence on the Chilean elite, than with the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) imposed by Washington during the following decades. Or, as Clara Han points out, referring to the economic reforms promoted by the Chicago school, with the 1973 coup "Chile became a testing ground for this normative approach" (Han, 2012:7).

The transformation that took place in Chile implied in any case the same kind of reconfiguration imposed by the SAP through "the privatization of a whole range of social services, including education and health, [that] was supposed not only to relieve the state of a heavy fiscal burden, but also to compel those who could afford to pay user charges to do so" (Mkandawire, 2005:3). These transformations came along with a deep social and cultural transformation that had a deep impact, gradually diminishing the role of *pobladores* as political actors, particularly after the dictatorship ended in 1990.

These transformations had important impacts on approaches to housing policies. Looking at the definitions of housing given by different governments, we can observe how the understanding of it changed over time. For the Christian Democrat government led by Frei Montalva (1964-1970) housing was '*a first need good that every family must have access to, regardless of its socioeconomic level'.* But for the socialist Allende (1970-1973) it was conceptualised as *'an inalienable right, and the state has the duty to deliver it… without considering it as a profitable object, but as one that answers the needs and social condition of people'*. And finally, for Pinochet (1973-1990) it was understood as '*a good that must be acquired by families through their efforts and savings'* (Cociña, 2012).

During this period, housing policies were transformed towards a 'capital housing subsidy model' (Gilbert, 2004) leaving in private hands the management, design, construction and capitalisation of profits of social housing production, while residents became owners of the houses through state subsidies for housing demand. In a sense, while distributional decisions remained in the hands of the state through the management of subsidies, most spatial decisions were left in the hands of private agents. This scheme, running from the 1980s, allowed the building of thousands of units and continued after the return of democracy in 1990, dramatically reducing the number of families with housing needs, and considered over time as *'best practice'* by the international community:

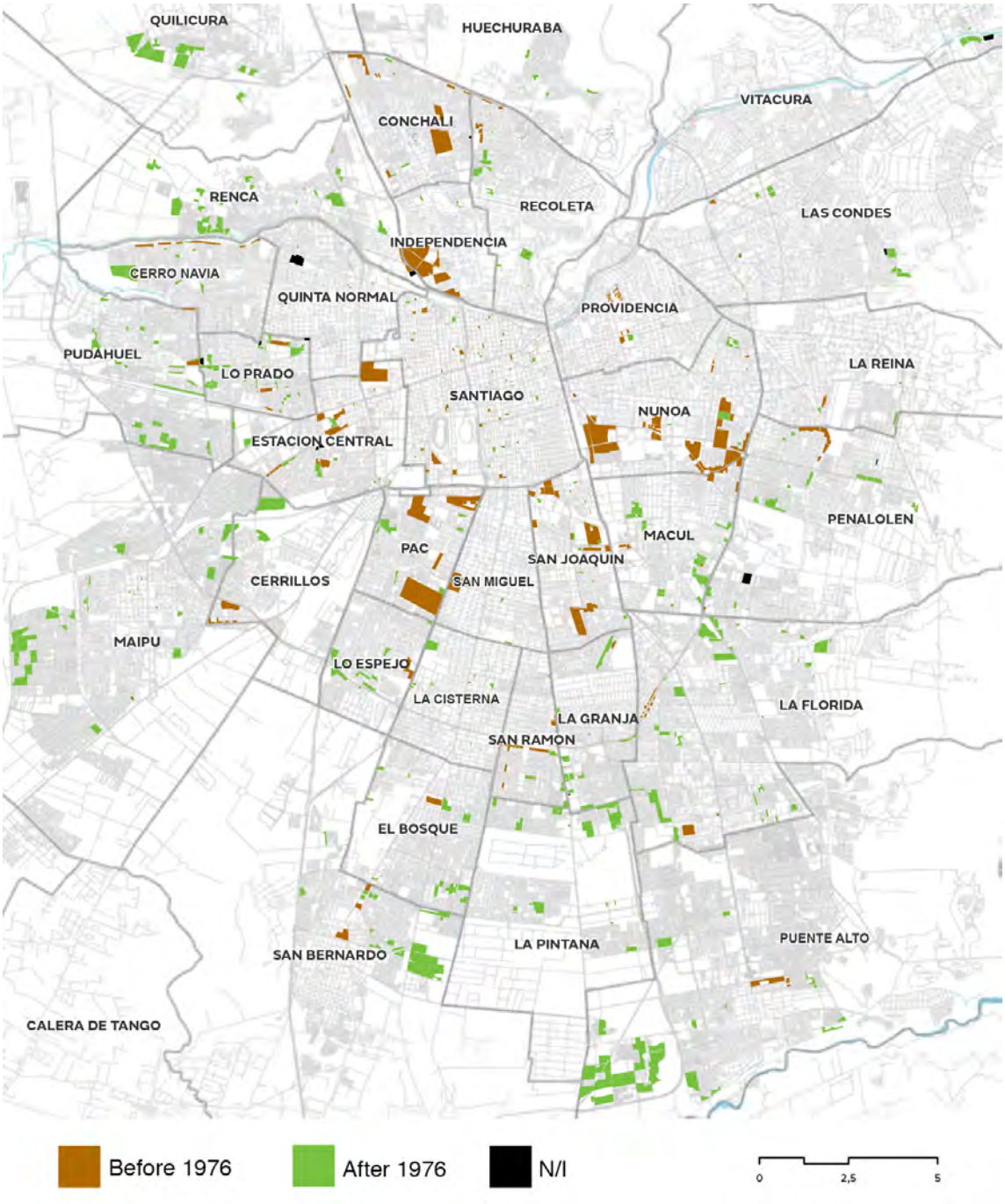
> In the years after 1977, the new demand-side subsidy mechanism gradually became an established part of the Chilean model. Initially, it was not all that successful and it took some years to begin to function properly (Nieto, 2000). Ironically, its best results were achieved under the democratic governments of the 1990s. Chile soon began to claim to be the only Latin American country that was managing to cut its housing deficit (Gilbert, 2002:310).

There were two main institutional changes that were key for the implementation of this model: the creation of a Housing and Urbanism Service, SERVIU, in 1976, and the implementation of a new Urban Development Policy in 1979. The SERVIU is, as its name says, a *service*, it is the management arm of the Ministry of Housing, and its main role is the management of subsidies. Unlike public institutions such as the CORVI and CORMU that had operated in previous decades, the SERVIU does not have capacities of direct execution, and this directly affects the room for decision-making about housing construction and location. As Figure 4.6 shows, the location of housing projects built before and after the creation of the SERVIU shows a displacement towards the peripheries. The MINVU itself has acknowledged that the creation of the SERVIU contributed to creating a housing stock with heightened patterns of segregation, poor architectural quality, lack of services and facilities, and facing important challenges in terms of social organisation for the maintenance of social condos (MINVU, 2014a).

The second institutional change was the implementation of the new Urban Development Policy in 1979, the most relevant aspect of which was the liberation of urban land through the abolition of the urban limit (Hidalgo 2004; Poduje, 2006). The motivation

behind such a measure was to avoid an alleged price distortion that such border would create, and to therefore reduce land price. The result, however, was very different: contrary to what was postulated by the Urban Development Policy, the greater availability of land did not reduce land value in Santiago; on the contrary, prices increased because of the speculative processes triggered by the greater availability of land realised by the market (Sabatini, 2000).

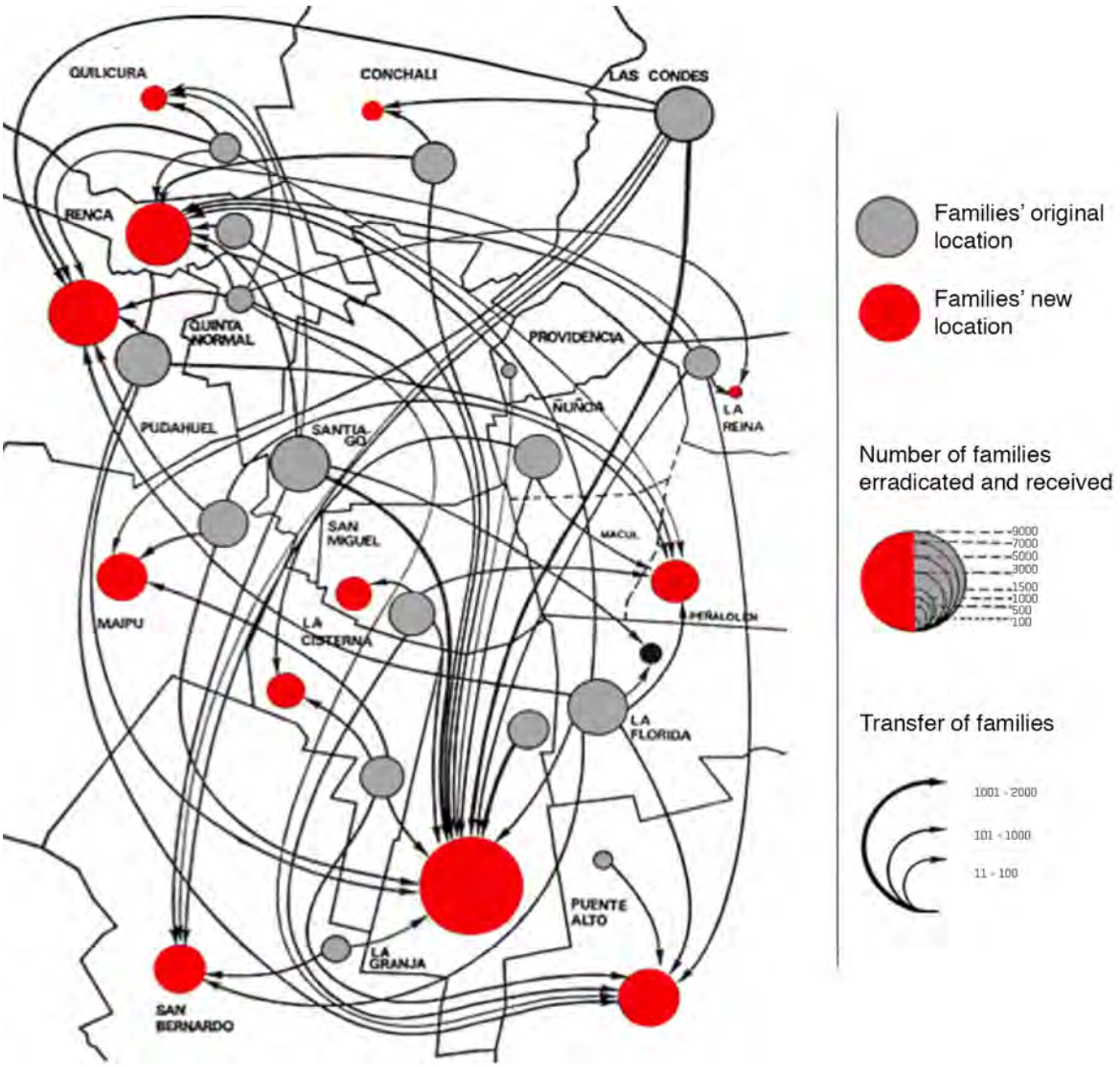
Figure 4.6 | Social Housing built before and after the SERVIU creation



Source: MINVU (2014b:167)

As a consequence of those speculative processes, the 1980s witnessed a massive process of expulsion of low-income groups and informal settlements from valuable land, through eradication programmes known as *Programas de Erradicación de Campamentos* (Jirón 2010b; Hidalgo, 2004). This was a phenomenon observed in many Latin American countries at the time, where "the poor were rendered invisible through deliberate displacement from the city's core - a practice generally supported by governments" (Hernández, 2011:68). Figure 4.7 shows the magnitude of the displacement of slum dwellers from central and rich areas (north-east) to the peripheries of Santiago between 1979 and 1985, particularly to the south and west of the city, where vast areas were consolidated as socially and functionally homogenous.

Figure 4.7 | Eradication of people from slums in Santiago: origin and destination, 1979-1985



Source: Gurovich (1989); modified by author

4.2.3 Optimism of the 1990s vs. the problem of "los con techo"

After the end of the dictatorship in 1990, a process that has been called 'the transition to democracy' started; the transition, that was led for 20 years by a centre-left coalition, was characterised by politics of consensus and political equilibrium, in which a smooth process of transformation towards more socially responsive public policies took place, but keeping untouched the core of the neoliberal reforms introduced by Pinochet and the *Chicago Boys*.

The focus during the 1990s in most social policies (health, education, housing) was to increase the coverage of services and to decrease deficits. In the case of housing, as has been said, it was through a successful finance system structured by the provision of subsidies (a *voucher* system) and the management and construction of housing by the private sector, and between 1990 and 2000 an average of 90,000 families obtained a subsidy annually (Salcedo, 2010). This model proved to be effective in cutting housing deficit, and by 1993 "a Chilean-type model, or at least elements of the Chilean model, had become acknowledged best practice" (Gilbert, 2002:310).

Through the *Programa de Vivienda Básica* (Basic Housing Programme) and other instruments (MINVU, 2004), the Chilean state was able to decrease the housing deficit from more than 30% in 1990, to less than 10% in 2009. If by 1990 the deficit had reached one million units (Salcedo, 2010), by the end of 2009, government estimates indicated that the stock of inadequate housing "was over 400,000 houses, out of which over 80% were overcrowded and the remaining of very poor quality", and the number of "people living in illegal settlements has sharply decreased and today represents a small proportion of the population (less than 1%)" (Caldera Sánchez, 2012:6). According to Ariztía and Tironi, by 2010 there were 1,282 informal settlements in the country, including some micro-settlements with less than 20 households each (in Jirón, 2010b).

This achievement was accompanied by an equal rate of decline in poverty, due to this and other socioeconomic policies. The positive numbers and quantitative success during the *golden era* of the 1990s, however, contrast with the quality of the city produced, as Santiago is considered one of the most segregated capitals of the OECD (OECD,

2012a), and this can be explained in part by the constant process of exclusion of the poor from urban land that the private-led housing policy has created. These consequences started to be discussed after the 1990s: the result of the capital housing subsidy model was the construction of extensive areas of housing for the poor, socially and functionally homogenous, on cheap land in order to increase private profits, with the houses being regarded by the private sector as a profitable commodity, and the citizens as state-subsidised customers: "To provide housing for those in need and maintain the number of subsidised units built each year, the government financed small and sometimes poor quality housing" (Vargas, in Caldera Sánchez, 2012:22). The fact that this was a successful economic policy for financing housing but not necessarily a successful social policy has been acknowledged by many authors. A key contribution to this discussion was the reflections of Alfredo Rodríguez and Ana Sugranyes (2004, 2005) regarding the emergence of what they called the problem of *'los con techo'* ('those with a roof'), referring to poor families with access to formal housing, in contrast with the historical constraints regarding those without access to formal shelter:

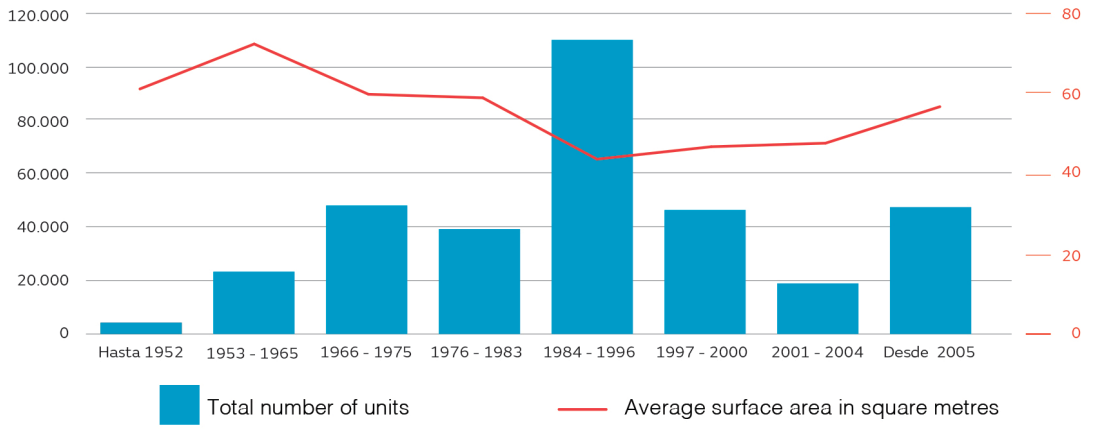
> This policy of housing production has not been discussed from the perspective of the quality of its products and, even less, regarding the social and urban problems that this massive housing production has caused (Rodríguez and Sugranyes, 2004:15).

A general debate about what has been called the 'the dark side of a successful housing policy' (Ducci, 2000) emerged. Some authors have studied in particular the extreme process of segregation that this set of policies has reinforced (Sabatini et al., 2001; Salcedo, 2010), as housing policy is recognised as having the ability *to build houses, but not cities* (Castillo Couve, 2004). Of particular relevance are the phenomenon of ghettoisation of areas of the city as a product of the social homogeneity enhanced by housing policies (Sabatini and Brain, 2008), and the idea that a new urban poverty (Tironi, 2003) has emerged as a consequence of it. The consequences for the daily life of the inhabitants of these new peripheries, some authors maintain, have spread to the entire city and affected the social and cultural development of Santiago as a whole (Greene and Soler, 2004). Thus, as had happened with modernist projects all over Latin America in previous decades, the 1990s formalisation of housing in Chile helped to "render the poor

invisible because the formal quality of the housing concealed the residents' deprived social conditions and poverty" (Hernández, 2011:68).

On top of these urban problems, the quality and size of housing units were critical as well. As a study of the MINVU shows, the period in which more units were built in Social Condos (between 1984-1996) was also the period in which the housing units had on average the smallest size, as shown in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8 | Chile (1936-2013): Number of housing units built in Social Condos vs. average surface area of houses



Source: MINVU (2014a:365)

Overall, a general question about the extent to which home ownership has contributed to decreasing social problems emerges:

> On one hand, through a massive program of investment in subsidized housing, more than a million Chileans have moved out from slums and shantytowns and become property owners. On the other, youth violence, drug trafficking, and other social maladies are increasing in many neighborhoods. It appears that home ownership has not been enough to overcome marginality and disintegration. Moreover, in some cases, moving to subsidized housing projects contributes to increased social problems, especially those related to violence and disintegration (Salcedo, 2010:90).

Although massive housing production was conducted through policies inherited from the dictatorship, during the past two and a half democratic decades housing institutions have changed to some extent, addressing some of the criticisms described. However, as in

other sectors such as education, health and pensions, changes after the dictatorship have been processes of '*improvement'* or *'corrections'* to the system, but not deep '*reform'*, understood as a process of re-asking what the role of the state should be in these sectors (Atria, 2012). This has also been the case for housing (Cociña, 2012), where such improvements included a progressive increase in the size and quality of housing solutions delivered, as well as changes in financial mechanisms and organisation.

As described by Juan Pablo Gramsch (2014), former Director of the Housing Division of the MINVU, in an interview for this research, the changes during the first years of the 21st century were mainly triggered as a response to policy failures, but also as an answer to the demand for the higher standards that the country started to require. These changes focused mainly on improving the technical standards of construction, through legal changes and the introduction of more effective control on construction. Two changes that Gramsch highlights as key during these years were firstly the increase in housing size (from 36sqm to 38, then 40, until today when the minimum is 42sqm for houses and 55sqm for flats), and secondly the introduction of requirements in terms of community involvement, and the resulting decrease of project sizes from neighbourhoods of 1,000 or 2,000 units, to projects of around 80 to 300 units.

In 2002, the 'Dynamic social housing without debt' (*Vivienda Social dinámica sin deuda*) programme was implemented, whereby the poorest groups receive a house without a loan, addressing one of the main socio-political conflicts at that time with 'housing debtors'. In the same year, the 'Competitive funds for solidarity housing projects' programme (*Programa fondo concursable para proyectos habitacionales solidarios*) was introduced, promoting the organisation of groups of people to develop alternative projects to what the traditional sector offered (Cociña and Boano, 2013). The number and amount of public subsidies increased, although the provision of housing was still in private hands: by 2010, 1.1% of GDP public spending was focused on housing support, much higher than in most OECD countries (Caldera Sánchez, 2012).

4.2.4 New claims and a new generation of policies

As mentioned, the strong focus on increasing the coverage of services and decreasing deficits was transversal to most social sectors during the 1990s and 2000s, and the shift from questions about *quantity* to those about *quality* has gained importance in different arenas over the last decade: housing, education, health, pensions, etc. Awareness of these phenomena is not limited to the housing sector.

Particularly regarding housing policies, there has been a series of attempts to address these issues. Probably the earliest started in 1996, when the Universidad de Chile initiated the first studies for the implementation of the *Chile Barrio* programme, which was going to be "the first housing programme that included a holistic view of poverty and demonstrated that through the provision of housing units only, the cycle of poverty would not be overcome but required additional dimensions including basic infrastructure, employment, training and community participation, among other things" (Jirón, 2010b:78). The high expectations around Chile Barrio were followed by equally high criticism, due to the lack of monitoring and achievement of its goals. There were also other adaptations to the structure of subsidies that allowed some improvements, as well as alternative projects and design strategies – generally reduced in scale – with a focus on incremental housing (Greene and Rojas, 2010). The incremental housing projects designed by the internationally awarded studio Elemental are an example of these singular and quite unusual experiences.

The main and most substantial transformation, however, came with the 2006 reform of National Housing Policy under President Bachelet's administration. The creation of the 'Housing Solidary Fund', as an extension of reforms initiated in 2002, implied that any application for new subsidised housing had to be done collectively, with families organised in collaboration with a Social-Estate Management Body (EGIS – *Entidades de Gestión Inmobiliaria Social*). Also, the subsidies system introduced new variables, such as the creation of special subsidies for Socially Integrated Projects (PIS – *Proyectos de Integración Social*), for projects in higher density areas, and for well-located projects. Another programme that was implemented was the 'Family assets protection programme' (PPPF – *Programa de Protección del Patrimonio Familiar*), which promoted the

improvement of houses and public spaces. A significant effort to address problems of vulnerability and ghettoisation of neighbourhoods was made by creating the programme "I love my neighbourhood" (PQMB), which had a focus on social and physical improvements with a strong component of participation. Some other transformations that sought to achieve social integration in the city, such as the requirement for quotas of social housing units in real estate developments, were stopped by the political opposition and institutions like the Chilean Chamber of Construction.

After a new right-wing government, led by Sebastián Piñera, took over in 2010 there were some further changes to the policy, particularly regarding the unification of a unique subsidy for middle-class and emerging groups (DS1), and the elimination of the requirement for a Social Estate Management Body (EGIS) and incorporation of individual applications for poor households subsidies (Cociña and Boano, 2013). Piñera's government also introduced a series of new programmes, two of which were particularly different from what had been done before. One of these new programmes was the introduction of some rental subsidies for specific groups, in a context in which every single previous effort had been focused on housing ownership. The other was the programme called 'Second opportunity', which was applied as a pilot in four degraded neighbourhoods through the demolition of buildings. This programme was the ultimate response of a series of attempts to take care of the built stock of Social Condos that started at least in 1998 (MINVU, 2014a:495).

In 2013, a first measure of Qualitative Housing Deficit was incorporated to the official National Survey of Socioeconomic Characterisation (CASEN – *Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional*). This first calculation included three different features that houses could require: (a) requirements for extensions; (b) requirements for material improvements and housing conservation; and (c) requirements for access to basic sanitary services. According to the Comisión de Estudios Habitacionales y Urbanos (2015), the survey showed that 25% of the housing stock had some level of qualitative deficit, most of this being a requirement for material improvements. This definition of quantitative deficit is, however, very much limited to the scope of the housing unit, and does not reflect the variety of urban and social shortcomings discussed previously.

4.2.5 A new National Policy of Urban Development and the notion of urban equality

The most important institutional effort in this direction has been the approval of the new National Policy of Urban Development (PNDU – *Política Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano*), which had been developed for many years, and which has a strong focus on urban equality and integration. A multiple-actor advisory committee approved the final draft of this policy during Piñera's government. It is remarkable how some of the critics and ideas that have emerged from academia in the last decade have been incorporated by public institutions at least in their narratives and objectives, particularly relating to issues of integration and equality. The PNDU defined five 'Principles and Objectives': social integration; economic development; environmental equilibrium; heritage and identity; and institutions and governance (Giménez and Ugarte, 2014).

The second government of Bachelet, which started in March 2014, created the National Committee of Urban Development (CNDU – *Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano*), whose task is to make proposals and monitor the implementation of the approved PNDU (Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano, n.d.). This implies materialising the discussion on a Land Policy, hitherto non-existent, and proposing agreements to achieve the goals of urban equality and integration. The CNDU is a committee formed by representatives of different institutions including the private and public sector, academia, and multiple stakeholders, and led by a president appointed by the central government.

Luis Eduardo Bresciani, president of the CNDU, explains in an interview for this research how the different concepts and ideas introduced by the PNDU are defined and understood in the CNDU, considering the heterogeneity of its members:

> We received a Policy that defined *social integration* as one of its key axes, not *social equity.* So we used the idea of Integration as an umbrella, unpacked in three concepts: Equity, defined as access to services; Diversity, defined as social integration, social and cultural diversity, etc.; and Cohesion, defined as democracy, rights, participation, transfer of power. (…) We had to do this because we had very different ideas of what Equality means; for some members it had to do exclusively with access to public goods, and therefore they tried to restrict equality just to quantified things, public investment and infrastructure;

> for me equality is that, but it is also social diversity, civil rights, cohesion, democracy; so we defined these three concepts as separated to ensure that all aspects were in place (Bresciani, 2015).

Pablo Contrucci (2014), director of the Urban Development Division (DDU) of the MINVU, explains in an interview for this research that *equality* is the central motive of the current administration, and the implementation of the PNDU is the mandate of this government. This materialises in a series of concrete programmes and initiatives that put equality at the centre of their objectives and narratives. The three programmes directly related to this that the president asked the DDU to implement are 200 new neighbourhoods for the PQMB, 34 new parks, and the construction of 192km of cycleways. But also, Contrucci explains, there are at least three other initiatives in this direction on which the government is working at the moment. One is the 'Law of contributions', which asks private developers to generate urban improvements and compensations, particularly those which are within the city. The second is the creation of a Land Policy and land management system, as part of the tasks of the CNDU: land management not just to activate real estate projects, but land management leading to equality. And the third is the modification of a legal instrument called DFL2, that allows the creation of urban polygons to generate social housing and socially integrated projects within the city.

The incorporation of urban equality and integration into the Ministry agenda, however, has seen opposition from some stakeholders, particularly construction and real estate actors grouped in the Chilean Chamber of Construction (CChC), which see in some of these projects a threat to their businesses. Even though the CChC participated both in the committee that wrote the PNDU and in the CNDU, this has not been free from controversy. Actually, the first draft of the Policy available online[4] included a final note in which the President of the CChC indicated that his signature and approval of the document were subject to a series of considerations that included: his rejection of any kind of real estate activity from the state, which should constrain its role to providing

[4] In February 2017, the first draft of the PNDU is still available online at http://www.fau.uchile.cl/documentos/descargar-documento-politica-nacional-de-desarrollo-urbano_91231_0_3324.doc

incentives and subsidies; his rejection of the definition of additional and specific taxes; and his concern with ambiguities about the definition of *subjective norms* related to, for example, the 'quality of architecture'. All these aspects, he adds in the note, would be contrary to some of the fundamental principles that the CChC protects.

The discussion within the CNDU has involved disagreement among its members when they have discussed the details of its implementation, as the Policy is supposed to translate into obligations for the private and public sector, and defining the content of those obligations is a big political task. This becomes particularly challenging when dealing with the concepts of Integration and Cohesion. As Bresciani (2015) explains, members of the committee would argue that 'it is proven that equality in access to public goods is important for society, but it has not been proven that integration and social diversity is a good'.

It is clear that the introduction of these ideas is challenging, but it is also clear that, even with resistance, they are part of the official narrative and have been introduced as key goals in some of the policies, particularly since 2006. This is why it is relevant to look at the results of the programmes in relation to such goals, and to see their impact in the territory in terms of multiple inequalities.

All these new challenges exist, in part, because of the internal debates referred to above regarding housing and city quality, but also because of international recommendations of organisations such as the OECD (OECD, 2013; Caldera Sánzhez, 2012). Internationally, many countries are witnessing a new generation of policies of mass housing strategies that share some common elements: they share a central role for nation states; they are almost entirely private sector driven; there is an acceleration of the commodification of housing; they are centred on instruments of state subsidies; and "almost invariably have been made possible by the production of housing of very minimum spatial and building standards in peripheral land with very low levels of urbanisation" (Fiori and Santa Rosa, 2014:2). In the case of Chile, these kinds of policies have already been in place for more than 25 years, and the strategies implemented in the

last decade are seeking to address some of their consequences. It is in this context that it is important to study these programmes from a lens of social justice and inequality.

Final comments

This chapter has examined the historical Chilean context in terms of inequality reductions and housing policies. It has provided a revision of the main historical features, and has particularly focused on the current challenges and debates in both areas, particularly housing. As inequalities gain importance in the social and political agenda, sectoral policies and debates are facing the enormous challenge of taking care of the multiple manifestations of inequalities.

Through this historical revision, we have observed how the nature of housing policies has changed over time and therefore the roles of the state, the private sector and citizens in its production have also altered, establishing the roots of the specific institutional configuration existing today. Certainly, the deep sociocultural transformation experienced by Chile during the dictatorship explains part of this trajectory. But the history of ideas and practices of housing policies is not isolated from debates and projects developed elsewhere, particularly in Latin America, where many of the challenges are shared, even though the decreased number of informal settlements can be seen as an exception in the regional context.

In recent decades, sectoral policies such as housing have defined the reduction of inequalities as a *mandate*, so it is worth asking how that determination translates into the territories and everyday life of residents, particularly for policies like housing that, as discussed previously, can have impact in multiple dimensions. As we move forward into the description of the territorial context in which this research took place, it is relevant to embrace this institutional context regarding the two main features that constitute the object of this analysis – inequalities and housing – in the Chilean context. In so doing, we are able to explore the implications of this research beyond the borders of the specific territory and context in which it is based, and investigate wider questions about current challenges of housing production.

CHAPTER 5

The territory: Exploring lived Inequalities in Bajos de Mena

Introduction[5]

For decades, housing in Chile has been one of the main engines behind the construction of cities, and so cities – more or less unequal, more or less integrated, more or less precarious – have been mainly shaped by the decisions behind housing production. As was discussed in Chapter 4, those decisions have, since the 1980s, been mainly of two different types: distributive decisions that have mostly been in the hands of the state through the management of subsidies; and spatial and territorial decisions, which, given the lack of a land policy and the logic of the subsidiary state, have been mainly in private hands and have followed market logics. Even though this approach has been recognised as successful and as *best practice* (Gilbert, 2002), there have been important critics of the socio-spatial consequences of such a model (Ducci, 2000; Sabatini et al., 2001; Rodríguez and Sugranyes, 2004; De Mattos et al., 2004; Sabatini and Brain, 2008; Salcedo, 2010). The period of solid indicators, the post-dictatorship Chilean miracle and its housing correlate, had consolidated a way of producing cities whose main urban consequences have been high levels of segregation.

The most notable aspects of this phenomenon is the construction of areas in the peripheries of Chilean cities in which housing for the lowest decile is concentrated, with socially and functionally homogenous neighbourhoods, low quality of housing construction, few public facilities, poor connectivity, and on occasions high levels of overcrowding, stigmatisation, violence and social problems. Areas such as Alto Hospicio in Iquique, Padre las Casas in Temuco, Las Compañías in La Serena, Alerce in Puerto Montt or Bajos de Mena in Santiago, became a referent for this kind of landscape: the

[5] A previous version of this chapter was published in Spanish as a *Working Paper* of the United Nation Development Programme of Chile (see Cociña, 2016).

product of a public policy that found in the peripheries of the cities, with their cheap land and possibilities for economies of scale, the only *profitable* field for giving space to the poorest families in society.

How are inequalities lived in these areas? What are the histories behind them? How have these segregated areas contributed to creating or reproducing inequalities? This chapter presents the history and urban reality of one of them, Bajos de Mena (BdM) in Puente Alto, in order to introduce the context in which this research took place, but also to shed light on how inequalities are lived and deepened in the city, and how the action of the state has been behind the creation of such inequalities.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the case of BdM from an analytical perspective. Then, rather than disaggregating the data about inequality in the area, it seeks to explore the ways in which these inequalities are experienced and inhabited, through personal stories that allow reflections about the materiality of life and inequalities for the residents. The first part of the chapter presents an introduction to the urban context where Puente Alto and BdM are located. Then the second section presents the specific context and history of BdM, describing the interventions that the sector has witnessed. And finally the main section of this chapter presents stories and narratives that show how inequalities are lived in this territory in economic, social and political terms, following the discussion presented in previous chapters. For each of these dimensions it presents individual stories that show the diversity of realities displayed in BdM. These stories as a whole provide a sample of the materiality of inequalities in Chilean cities. All these stories give an account of how the country's alarming inequality data are translated into concrete challenges during the day-to-day life of citizens, and how the city is not just a landscape where inequalities take place, but rather a manufacturer of them.

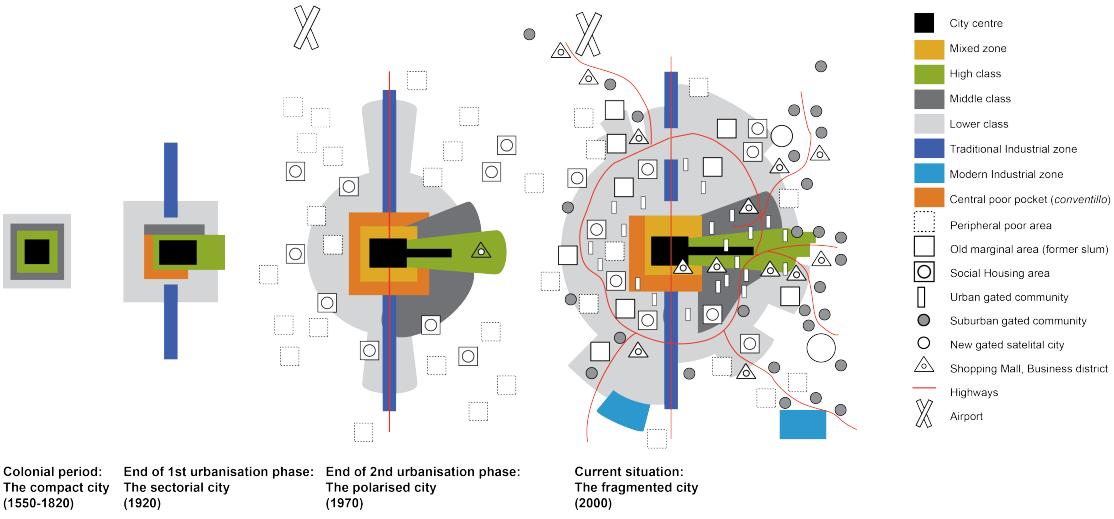
5.1 Puente Alto: The outskirts of a segregated city

Santiago is the capital and largest city of Chile, with almost seven million inhabitants, more than 35% of the national population. As Chile has faced unprecedented economic stability and growth over recent decades, Santiago has become one of the major

economic hubs of the Latin America region, despite its smaller size compared with cities such as São Paulo or Buenos Aires. At the same time, however, Santiago demonstrates high levels of segregation, which can be explained in part by the constant process of exclusion from urban land that the private-led housing policy has created. As a product of the different processes that has constituted it, Santiago has created "a *social morphology* in which social polarisation and segregation persist" (De Mattos et al., 2004:19).

Since the 1970s, authors have tried to define a model of growth patterns for Latin American cities, following the urban tradition of the Chicago school of sociology (Janoschka, 2002; Borsdorf, 2003). Even though these models vary from one to another, segregation based on social groups is a common feature in all of them. The model of structural development of Latin American cities developed by Borsdorf (2003) applies particularly to the situation of Santiago (Figure 5.1), in which upper income groups are concentrated in just one area of the city, and the socio-spatial distribution of other groups is determined by certain spatial patterns.

Figure 5.1 | Model of structural development of the Latin American city

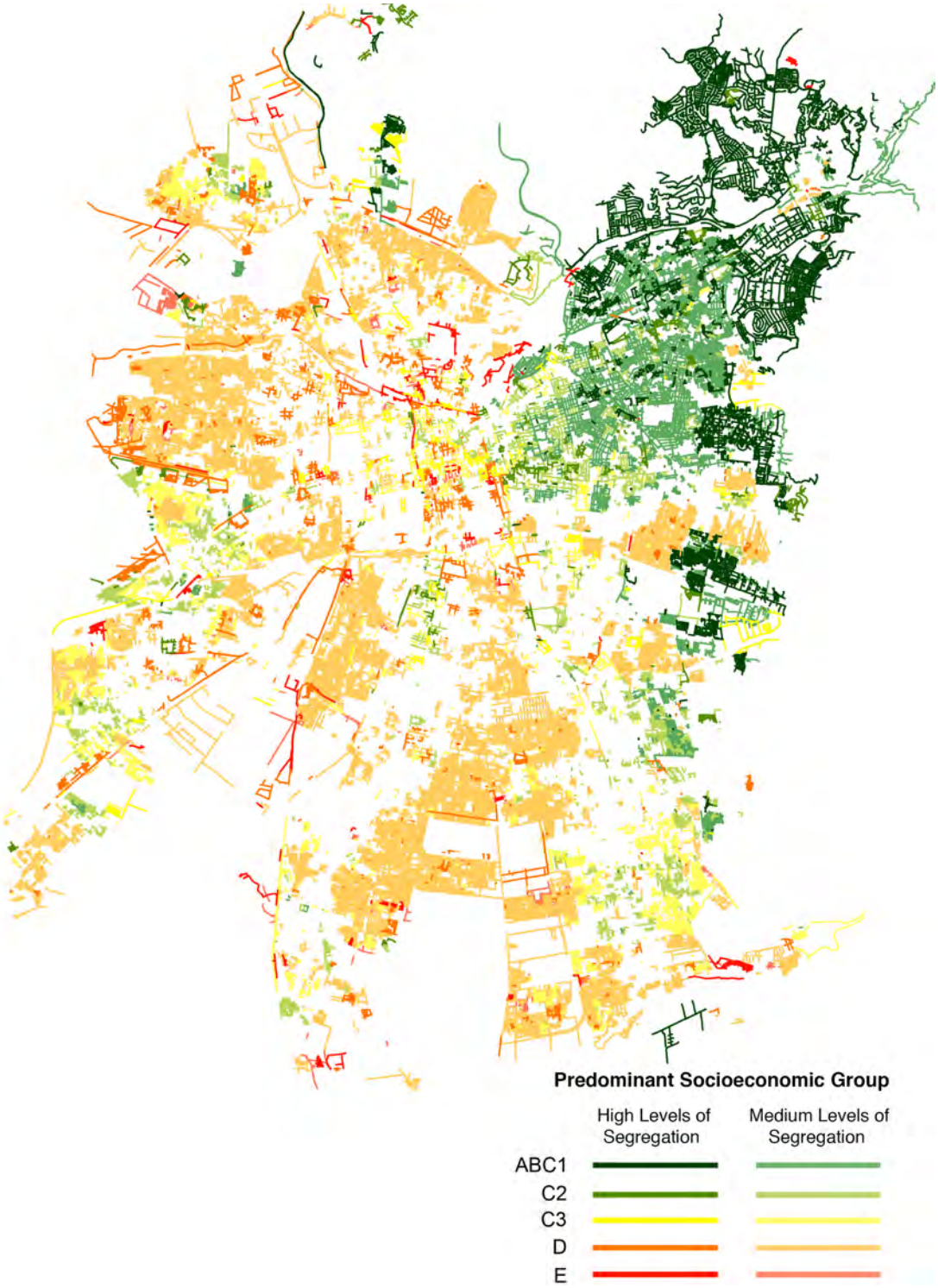


Source: Borsdorf (2003), re-drawn by author

These segregation patterns found in Santiago can be very well summarised in terms of three principles, as described by Sabatini et al. (2010): high levels of segregation in upper income households, concentrated in just one area of the city; lower levels of segregation in middle-income areas; and high levels of segregation in lower-income areas, in most of

the peripheries of the cities. Figure 5.2 shows the areas of Santiago in which there are high or medium-to-high levels of segregation, divided by socio-economic groups.

Figure 5.2 | Areas with high and medium segregation by socioeconomic groups



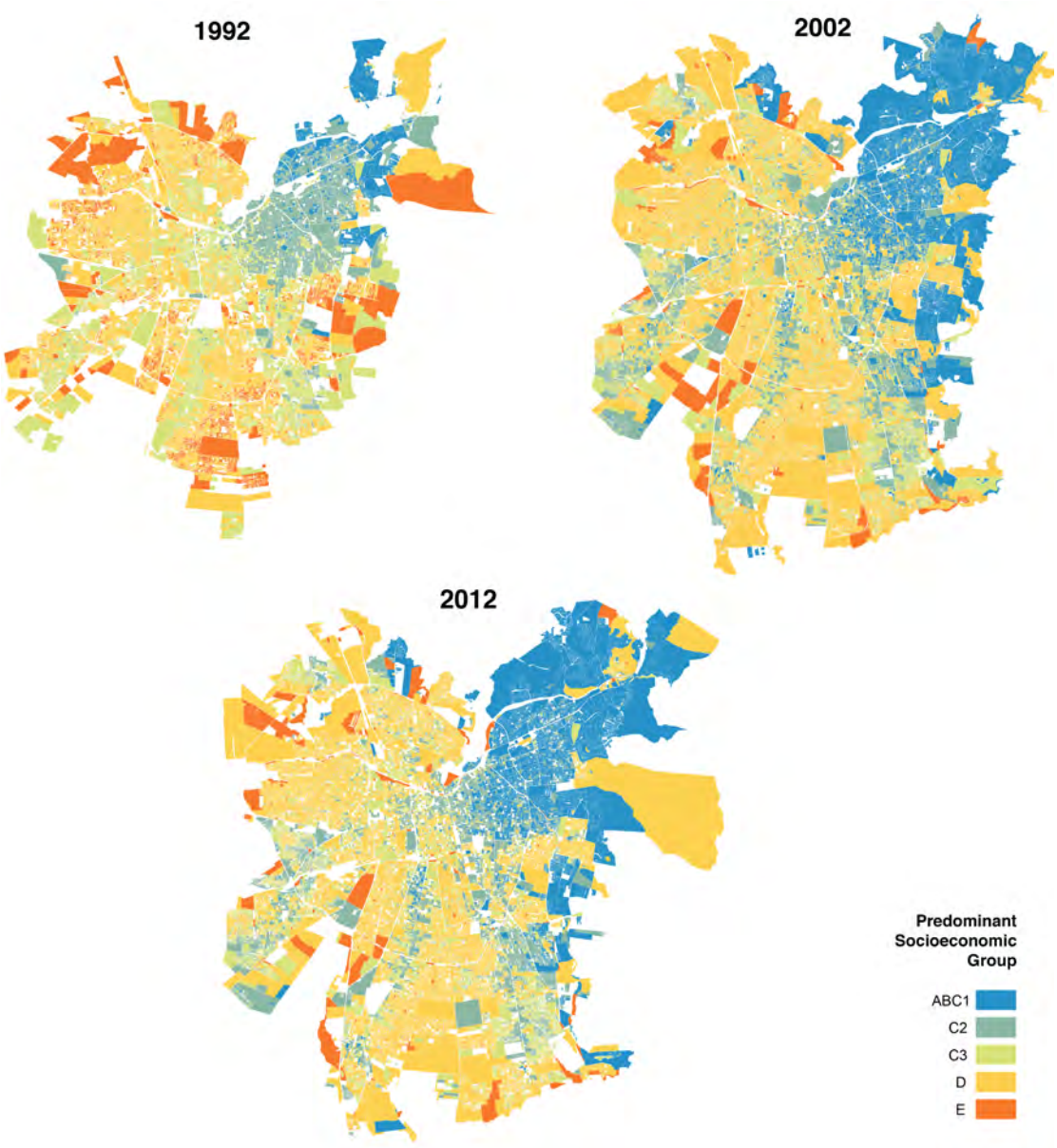
Source: Author, based on data of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez[6]

[6] These segregation indicators were developed by the team of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, based on coexistence of different social groups by street

One of the main consequences of these levels of segregation is that most assets and opportunities are also unequally distributed, favouring particularly those areas of the city in which high levels of segregation of upper income households are concentrated. The administrative structure of Santiago strengthens this kind of division, as it does not have a single metropolitan authority or mayor and is divided into 37 *comunas* or municipalities, with very unequal budgets and human capacities, thus intensifying the differences between various territories. Figure 5.3 shows the concentration of different socioeconomic groups in 1992, 2002 and 2012 in Santiago, illustrating clearly the concentration of rich groups in the northeast of the city, known as the *high-income cone*, and the impoverished areas particularly in the west and south.

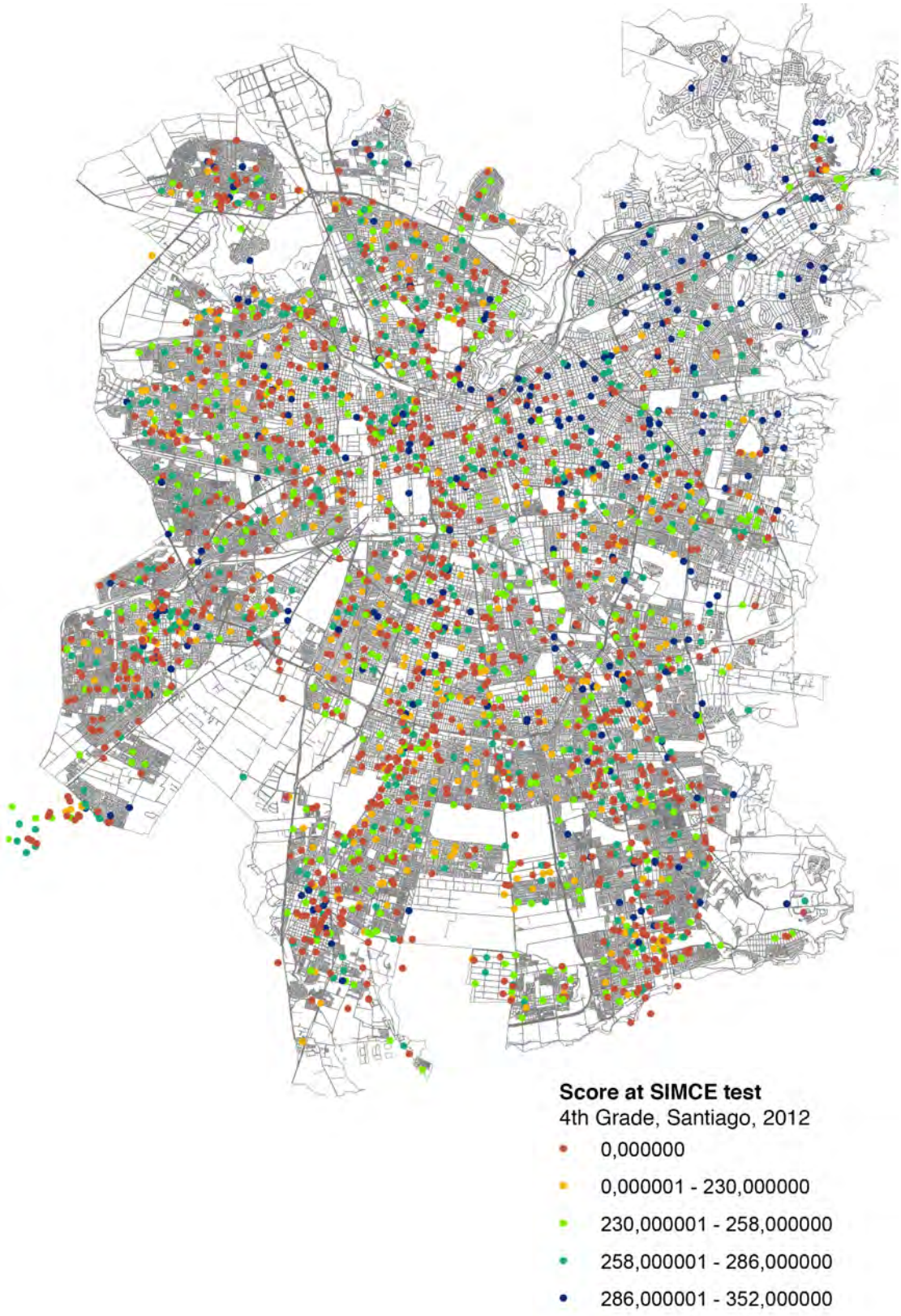
The distribution shown in these maps is repeated as a pattern when looking at almost any single indicator in Santiago: concentration of good performance in the northeast cone and the city centre, and prevalence of poor conditions in the rest of the peripheries, particularly the south and west. This is the case for access to green areas, cultural spaces, and facilities in general, which also translates into opportunities for residents (Greene et al., 2008). Figure 5.4, for example, shows the school performance in the standardised SIMCE test (*Sistema de Medición de la Calidad de la Educación*) for fourth grade pupils in Santiago, which clearly reflects the educational opportunities that children have in each area of the city.

Figure 5.3 | Predominant Socioeconomic groups in Santiago, 1992, 2002, 2012



Source: Author, based on data of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

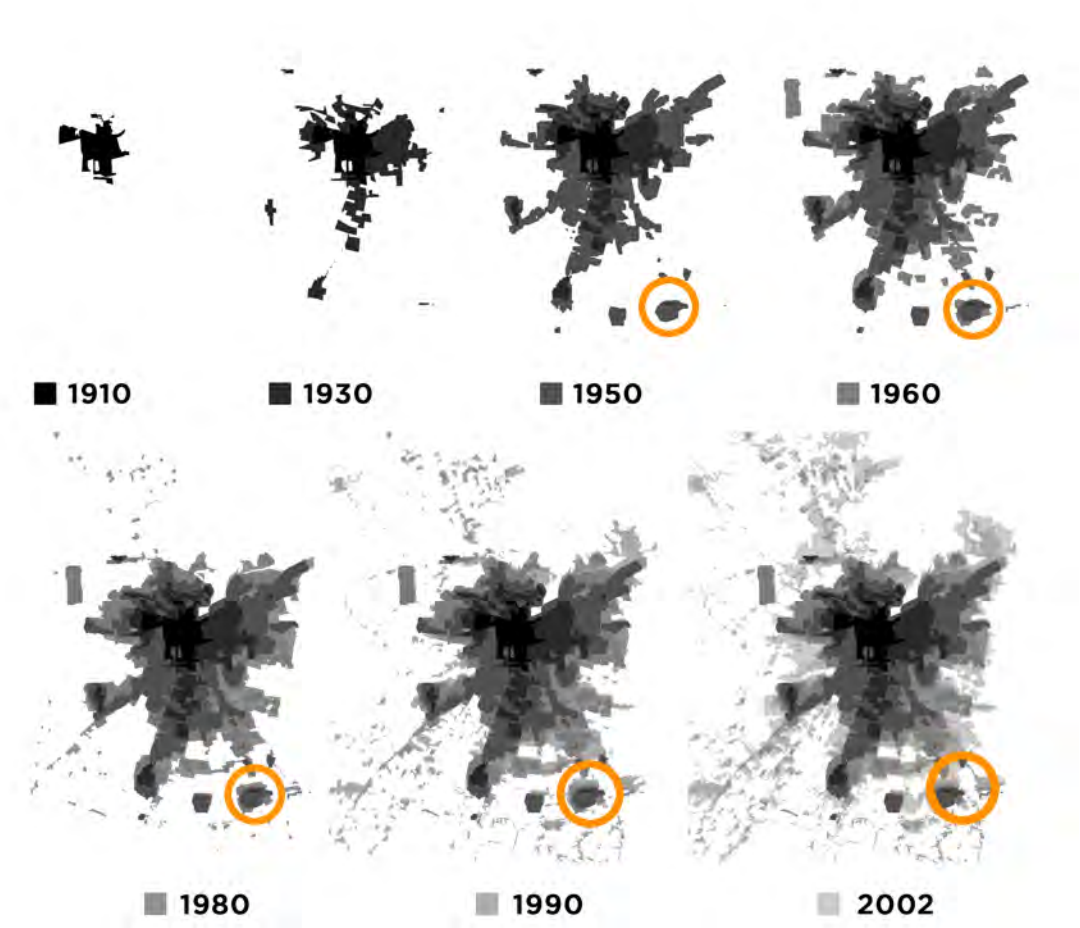
Figure 5.4 | School performance of SIMCE test for fourth grade in Santiago, 2012



Source: Author, based on data of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

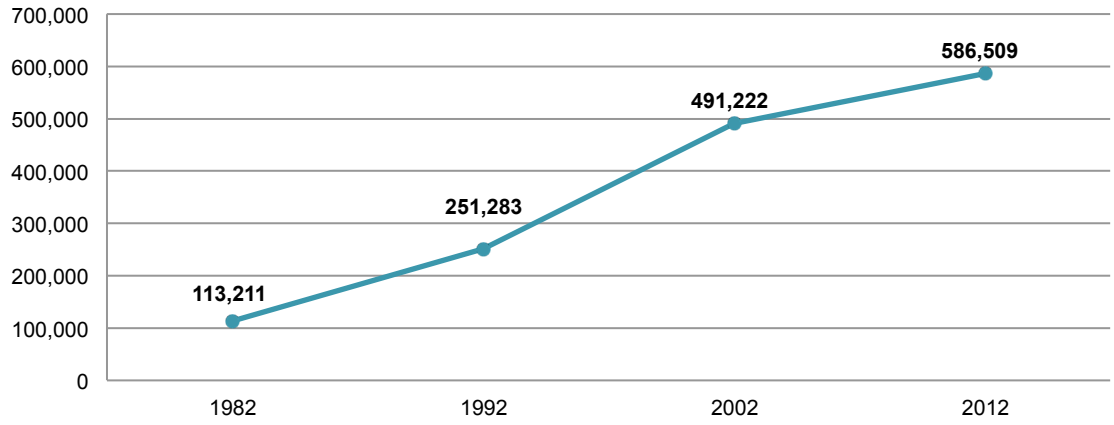
The biggest *comuna* of Santiago and Chile is Puente Alto, located in the southeast of the city. Puente Alto has a population of 586,509 inhabitants, and had an increase of population between 1992 and 2012 of 95.5% (INE, 2012). Historically, Puente Alto was a village separated from the rest of Santiago, physically integrated with the capital only since the 1990s (Figure 5.5). Since the beginning of the 20th century Puente Alto developed mainly as an industrial sector, hosting textile mills, paper factories, and producers of metal castings (including the Industrial Company '*El Volcán*'), among other industries.

Figure 5.5 | Growing of Santiago and location of Puente Alto



Source: Author, based on Poduje (2006)

Figure 5.6 | Historical evolution of the population of Puente Alto

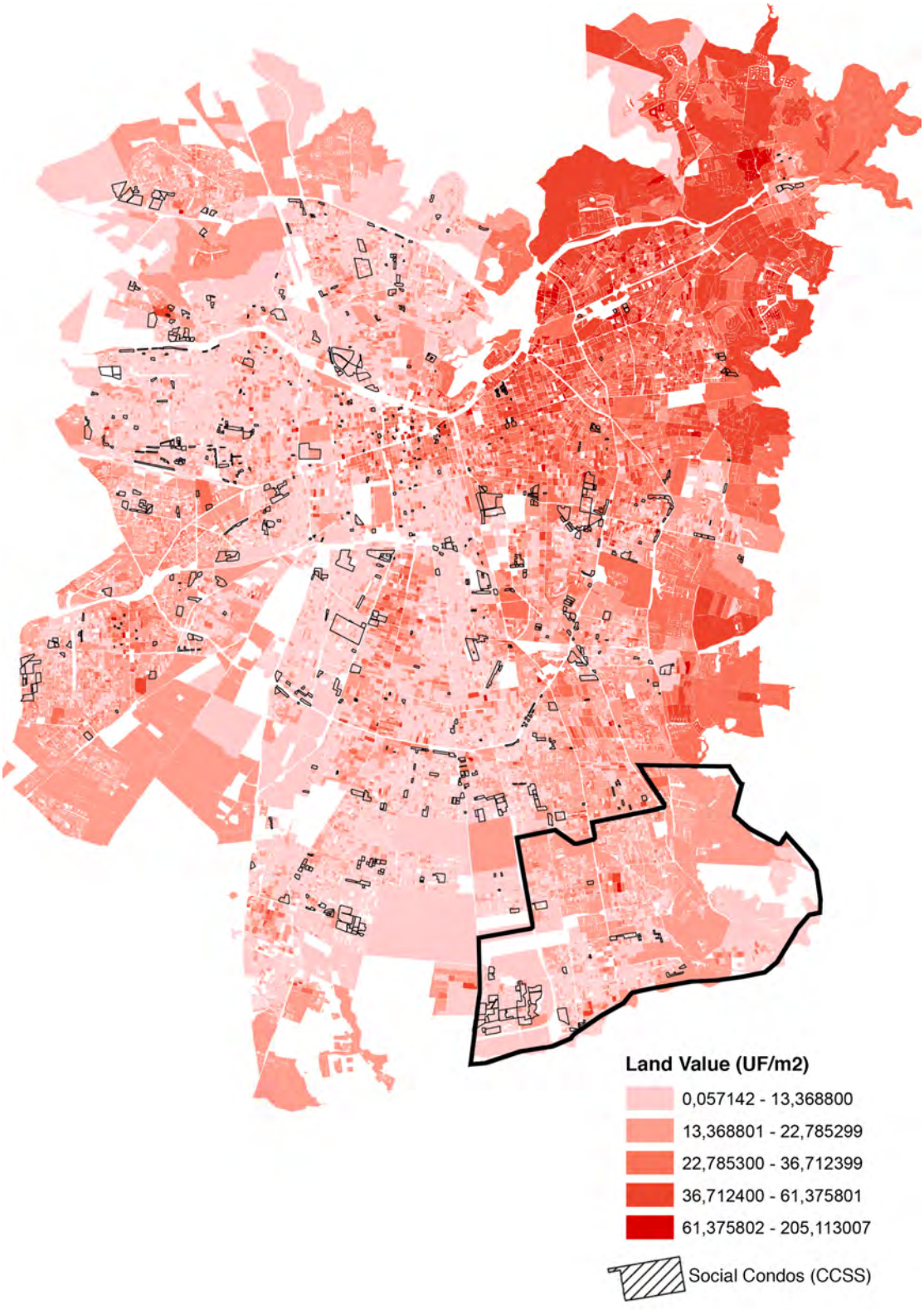


Source: Author, based on data from INE (1982, 2012)

The highest amount of social housing built in the city has historically been concentrated in Puente Alto (Tokman, 2006), particularly the construction of blocks of Social Condos (CCSS). CCSS are part of a longer tradition of middle and high-density social housing construction, which started in 1936 with the General law of Construction and Urbanisation (*Ley General Sobre Construcciones y Urbanización*) and in 1937 with the implementation of the *Ley de Venta por Pisos,* the first law that allowed property disposal by storey (MINVU, 2014a). For a period of 77 years, different housing policies resulted in the building of 1,555 middle- or high-rise social buildings, allocating 344,402 housing units (Irarrázaval, 2014). Puente Alto has 18,357 units that represent 9.4% of the regional stock of CCSS, and 5.3% of the blocks built at national level (MINVU, 2014a). As Figure 5.7 shows, there is a clear relation between the construction of CCSS and land value.

One of the most emblematic areas of Puente Alto is the sector called Bajos de Mena, named after Manuel Mena, the owner during the twentieth century of agricultural land situated south of the Canal Eyzaguirre. The first church of the *comuna* was located in this area – Parroquia San Pedro Nolasco – and over the years the area would receive a cemetery and an informal landfill site in the area of La Cañamera (Habiterra, 2008). This research focuses particularly on this area, and the following section tries to unpack the history of decisions that have shaped it.

Figure 5.7 | Land Value in Santiago and Social Condos (CCSS); Puente Alto highlighted



Source: Author, based on data of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

5.2 Bajos de Mena: The icon of a failed policy

It is hard to talk about BdM without resorting to simplistic generalisations, as both the press and occasionally politicians and academics do. It is too easy to impose simplistic labels on a territory that actually has a diversity of neighbourhoods, personal histories and household realities. According to the 2002 Census, BdM had a population of 122,278 inhabitants, and local authorities estimate that the current population is around 130,000, equivalent to a regional capital like Punta Arenas, which has 131,067 inhabitants (Figure 5.8). With its 600 hectares and almost 30 years of history, any attempts at categorisation seem reductionist. It has been called *the biggest ghetto of Chile* (Atisba, 2010) because of its concentration of poverty, vulnerability, social and functional homogeneity, violence and low social mobility. It is located 20km away from the centre of Santiago, and many residents – particularly women – spend their lives practically without leaving the perimeter of BdM. However, the word *ghetto* is one-dimensional, as it stigmatises and creates an identity, and this chapter seeks to contest homogenising constructions, exploring instead the range of inequalities lived and displayed in the territory. As discussed by Salcedo and Rasse (2012) in relation to urban poor families:

> The Chilean urban poor today are widely diverse, both in terms of culture and family identity, and in the patterns of structural inclusion or exclusion in society at large. At least in terms of identity, the idea of the poor as a homogeneous group or even the notion that "mainstream" or "decent" values coexist with "street" or "ghetto" values seems too simplistic to explain the effects of neoliberal restructuring of Chilean society (Salcedo and Rasse, 2012:113).

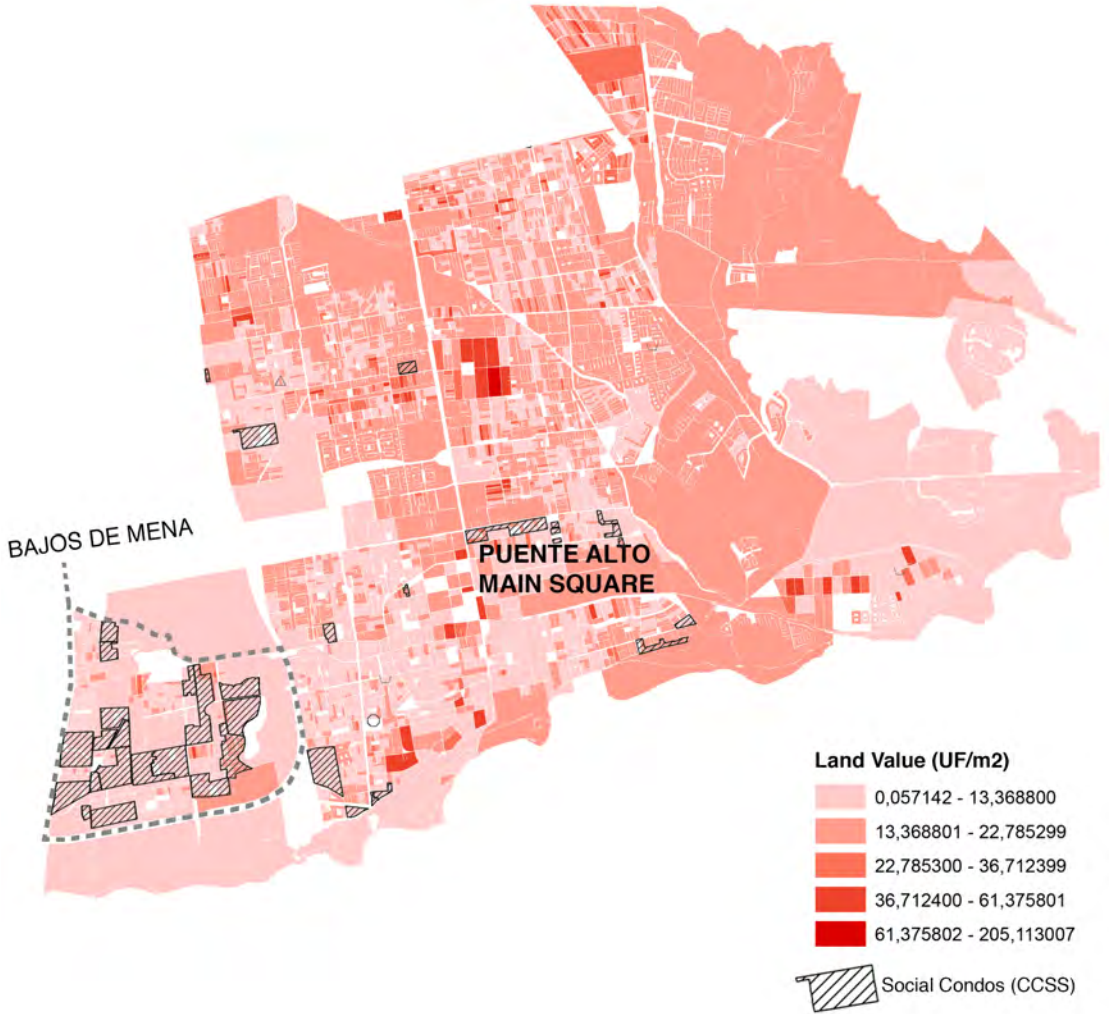
Since the 1970s, at the time that illegal occupations of land were expanding as a mechanism to obtain housing throughout the country (Garcés, 2002; Hidalgo, 2004), small sectors of BdM were illegally occupied by settlements such us La Cañamera in 1972. But it was after the 1980s and 1990s, through the purchase of land and bidding of housing projects by the SERVIU, that BdM was massively populated and became the densely populated territory that is today.

Figure 5.8 | BdM and the city of Punta Arenas (Maps at the same scale)

Source: Author, based Googlemaps

The recent history of BdM has become the paradigm of a failed way to produce housing. Since the beginning of the 1990s, and particularly after the incorporation of the area into the Metropolitan Regulatory Plan of Santiago of 1994 (PRMS – *Plan Regulador Metropolitano de Santiago*), 49 *villas* or neighbourhoods, and 25,466 housing units have been built in the area, most of them subsidised by the state and built by the private sector. Eighteen of these neighbourhoods are Social Condos (CCSS) of 3-4 storey blocks (Figures 5.9 and 5.10). Located in the southwest of Puente Alto, access to BdM is difficult, as it is surrounded by barriers such as the *Acceso Sur* highway, *Las Cabras* hill and a massive sand quarry in the south and east, and agricultural lots and Av. Santa Rosa in the north and west. Thousands of families share just one main connection with the centre of Puente Alto through Eyzaguirre Avenue (Figure 5.11). There is neither a police station nor a fire station, and there are just basic facilities such as local medical centres, schools, sports facilities, churches, some community centres and minor grocery shops. There is a high concentration of poverty, overcrowding and violence.

Figure 5.9 | Land Value in Puente Alto and Social Condos (CCSS); BdM area highlighted

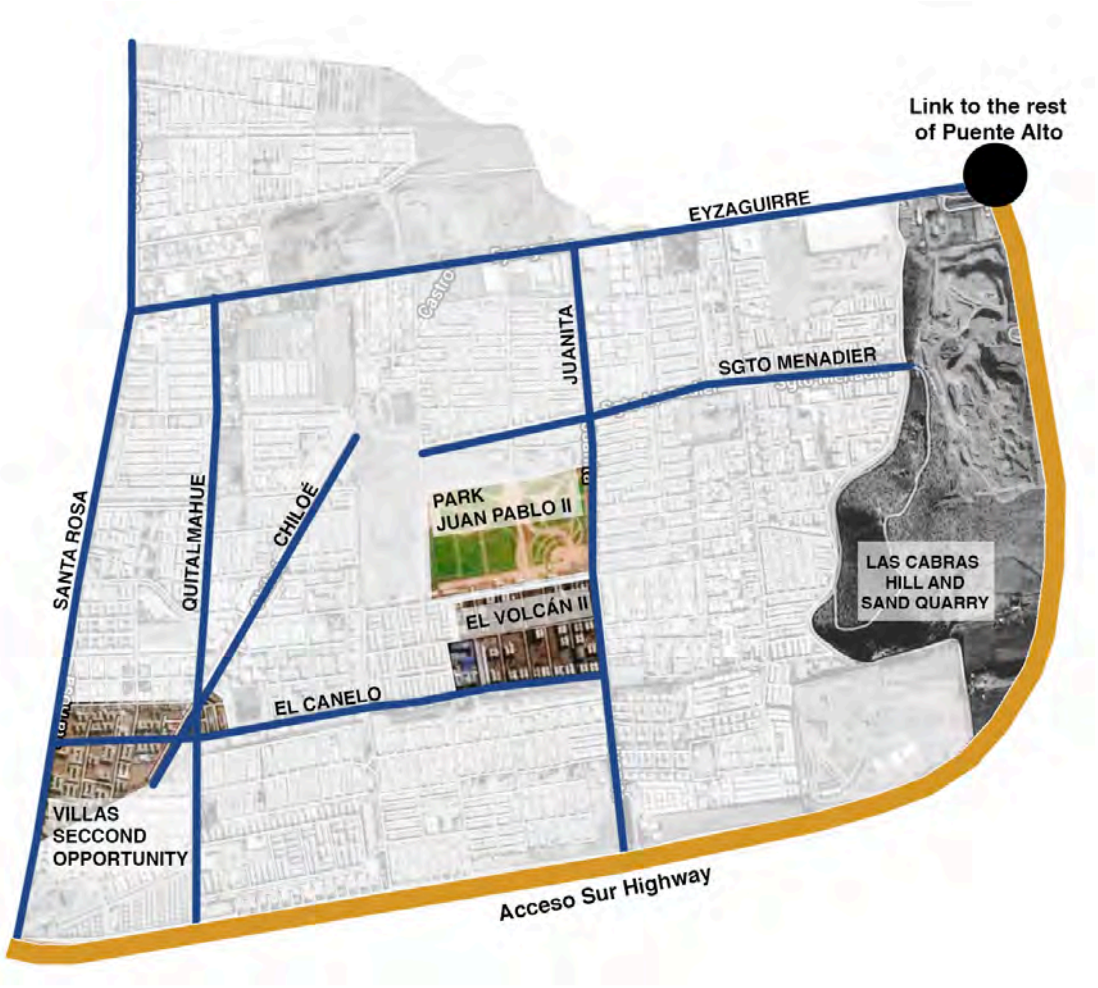


Source: Author, based on data of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

Figure 5.10 | Social Condos (CCSS) in BdM

Source: Author

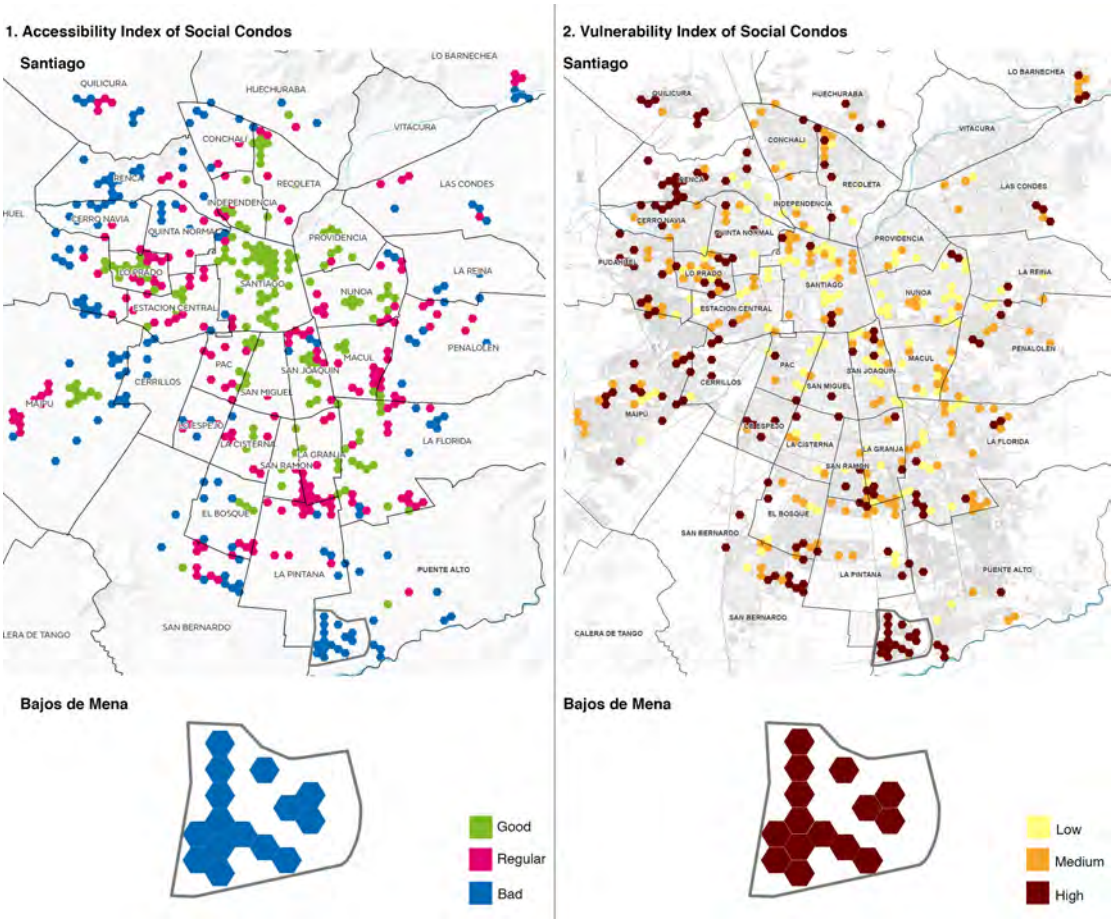
Figure 5.11 | Main urban pieces in BdM



Source: Author

Sabatini, Cáceres and Cerda (2001) propose three dimensions to define segregation: concentration of similar socioeconomic groups in parts of the city; the existence of socially homogenous neighbourhoods; and the subjective perception of the residents about segregation. Using these categories, BdM is segregated not just because it is socially homogenous, but also because of the precarious and subjective elements associated with the stigma of the area. According to the authors, the scale of segregation is also important as it changes the phenomenon itself, and in the case of BdM, given the physical distance from other social groups and the volume of people inhabiting it, represents a particular case where scale matters. Both levels of accessibility and indices of vulnerability are particularly dramatic for BdM compared with other concentrations of CCSS, as shown by research by MINVU (2014b) (See Figure 5.12).

Figure 5.12 | Accessibility and Vulnerability levels in CCSS



Source: MINVU (2014b:161-190) modified by author

Figure 5.13 | Landscape of BdM

Source: Author

5.2.1 El Volcán, the genesis of the stigma

It is problematic to use the term '*abandoned*' to refer to BdM. The idea of abandonment is usually linked to areas of the city which society has decided not to look at, where the state has been absent and where families are vulnerable to tragedy, violence, lack of services and precariousness. Somehow, this is not the case of BdM. Even if intuition may suggest the contrary, BdM has not exactly been abandoned: many public institutions have been present and intervening in the area for more than 15 years. So rather than having been abandoned, BdM has been mistreated by a society that, when it has focused on it, has done so in a way that mainly radicalises its conditions.

Even though large-scale construction of housing started in the early 1990s, it was in 1997 that BdM got national visibility. During that winter, blocks located in the *villa* El Volcán San José leaked badly letting in the rain shortly after being handed over to their residents. The media christened them '*Copeva Houses*', after the name of the construction company. The immediate solution provided by the authorities and Copeva was to cover the blocks with nylon, and this image circulated widely as a symbol of the affront to the occupants' dignity (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14 | El Volcán covered by nylon in 1997: The infamous Copeva Houses

Source: Press images; left image from Fernández, 2012; right image from Emol, 2012

El Volcán is actually a collection of five neighbourhoods built in three different stages, and known as El Volcán I, II and III respectively. Originally, they consisted of 3,563

houses with approximately 12,825 inhabitants, with flats of 42.5sqm in three storey blocks, with an average cost of 227 UF[7] per unit (Sandoval, 2005). The sub sector of El Volcán San José II was the most affected by the 1997 incidents. 6,148 inhabitants lived there originally in 1,708 houses, built by the private company Copeva, and assigned by the SERVIU to families who applied to what was called the Programme of basic housing for employees and workers (PET – *Programa de vivienda básica para empleados y Trabajadores*). Each family had to have minimum savings of 10 UF[8] (Habiterra, 2008).

The poor construction quality of the blocks, exposed by the rain, forced the government and Copeva to take action to refurbish the blocks, initially with an investment of 27,672 UF (12 UF per unit[9]) (Sandoval, 2005). But by the winter of 2000 the repaired houses started to leak again, so by 2001 the government proposed a series of alternatives to the residents: to change their house for another house of the SERVIU; to sell their house to the SERVIU and thereby obtain money to buy a house in the private sector; or to move temporally to a *hotel* (usually a vacated house in the same area), while waiting for the repairs to their original houses. In total, 29% of the families decided to move to another SERVIU house, 33% to buy a house in the private sector, and 38% to stay and have the houses repaired (Habiterra, 2008).

The execution of this *Mobility Plan* started a series of processes of depopulation and repopulation of El Volcán, that included the arrival of new illegal occupants (*tomadores)* using the vacant flats, social mobilisations, a lawsuit of the residents against the SERVIU, the relocation of the residents of the slum Cardenal Carlos Oviedo in some empty units, and finally, after 2008, the first demolitions executed by the SERVIU, consolidating the landscape of blocks, wastelands and debris that would be the widely believed image of BdM (Figure 5.15). In 2008, along with the demolitions in El Volcán, the section of the Acceso Sur highway around BdM opened, consolidating the fence that separates it from the rest of Puente Alto.

[7] UF (*Unidad de Fomento*) is a Unit of account used in Chile; most subsidies and housing prices are indicated in this unit. It is constantly adjusted for inflation. Its value by March 2017 is CL$ 26,396.79, approximately £32.
[8] In March 2017, 10 UF = £328.2.
[9] In March 2017, the total investment of 27,672 UF = £908,167; the investment per unit of 12 UF = £393.

Figure 5.15 | Evolution of Demolitions in El Volcán

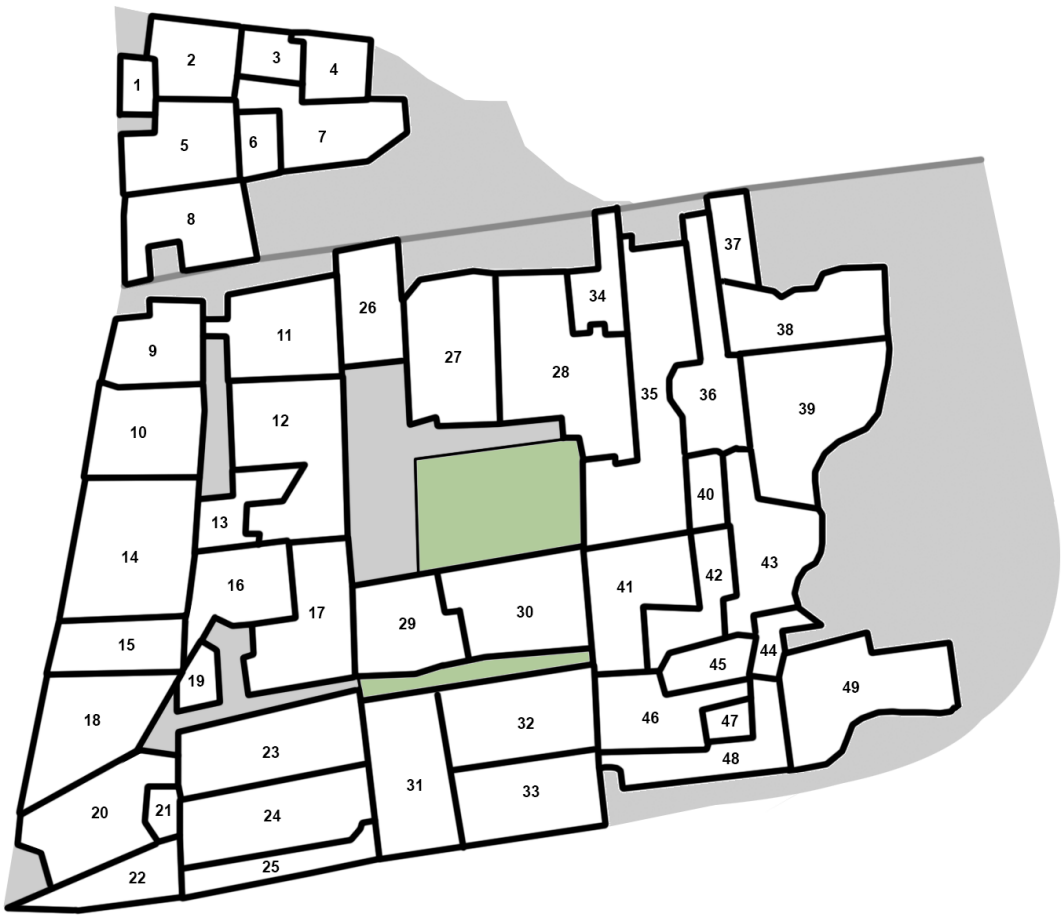
Source: Author based on information provided by MINVU

5.2.2 The guinea pig: Twenty years of public interventions

Despite the notoriety of El Volcán and the particularly violent memories of those who have inhabited it, the way in which the territory and its inequalities are lived in the 49 neighbourhoods or *villas* of BdM is not limited to this particular sector (Figure 5.16). Even today, new houses are built in the sector, and the number of families living there keeps growing. Different ministries and public departments have intervened in BdM, transforming it somehow into an urban laboratory, a guinea pig with very complex consequences.

Beyond El Volán, the MINVU has been present in BdM with some programmes that have generated important territorial improvements, and others whose consequences are still hard to imagine. On the one hand, there have for the last decade been interventions under the *Programa Quiero mi Barrio* (PQMB) that have improved infrastructure such as public lighting and facilities in the El Sauce, Marta Brunet, El Almendral, Estaciones Ferroviarias, Santa Catalina, Juanita Oriente and Monseñor Alvear neighbourhoods.

Figure 5.16 | Neighbourhoods (or *villas*) of BdM



Neighbourhoods

1. Villa Parque Queulat
2. Las Azaleas
3. Mamiña II
4. El Pangue
5. El Mariscal
6. Mamiña 1
7. San Francisco de Asís
8. Mourguez
9. Los Evangelistas I º
10. Los Evangelistas II
11. Jesús de Nazaret
12. Sargento Menadier II-IV
13. Sargento Menadier I
14. Pedro Lira
15. Chiloé I
16. Chiloé II
17. El Caluche
18. Francisco Coloane
19. Cerro Morado
20. Sergio May
21. Quitalmahue
22. Portada del Sur
23. El Almendral
24. Marta Brunet
25. El Sauce
26. Villa Santa Elvira
28. Estación Ferrocarriles I
29. El Volcán San José III
30. El Volcán San José II
31. San José de la Reconstrucción
32. Alto del Maipo I-II
33. Alto del Maipo III-IV
34. El Volcán San José I
35. Santa Catalina
36. San Guillermo I
37. Diego Portales
38. San Miguel IV-V-VI
39. San Miguel I-II-III
40. San Guillermo I
41. Hijuelas de San Guillermo
42. Casas de San Guillermo
43. Casas de San Guillermo II
44. San Guillermo II
45. Enrique Alvear
46. Juanita Poniente
47. Juanita Oriente
48. El Carbón / Mi Barrio Mi Familia
49. Teresa de Calcuta

Source: Author

Since 2010, BdM as a whole has been incorporated into the PQMB as one of the called Emblematic Neighbourhoods (*Barrios Emblemáticos*). The Emblematic Neighbourhoods, which included iconic areas of Santiago such as La Legua, implied a change of scale, budget and scope in relation to the regular PQMB, incorporating security programmes related to the Ministry of Interior, and using the scale of *Vulnerable Territories,* beyond the traditional neighbourhood or *villa*. For BdM, the Emblematic Neighbourhood programme included major interventions such as the construction of rainwater collectors, and the transformation of an old landfill site into a park in the area of La Cañamera. This park was then called Juan Pablo II because of the installation of a huge statue of the Pope, which originally was to have been installed in the centre of Santiago but was rejected by various parties, so a new location had to be found for it. Today this park is the main public space in the area, and is managed and maintained by the Municipality of Puente Alto.

Regarding housing, new neighbourhoods have been built, with a similar profile to the existing ones, but conforming to the current and stricter standards of SERVIU. The three newest neighbourhoods are *Mi Barrio Mi Familia*, *Teresa de Calcuta* and *Jesús de Nazaret,* which have been at least partially occupied by people from El Volcán. As well as the construction of new houses, however, BdM has also witnessed the demolition of houses, not just in El Volcán as an exceptional case, but also as a systematic effort related to the implementation of the programme *Segunda Oportunidad* during Sebastián Piñera's government. The first part of this programme took place in 2003 in four different areas of the country, including two neighbourhoods in BdM[10].

Finally, during recent years the MINVU and external consultants have developed a series of master-plan proposals to intervene in the area on a wider scale, proposing to give continuity to the incomplete roads, and to reconvert the area of El Volcán after the demolitions. These master plans have not been accompanied by stipulation of timeframes and systematic execution plans. Since 2014, however, the central government designated a 'presidential delegate' in charge of developing an *Integral Plan* for BdM. The aim of the Integral Plan is to develop a master plan and to put together in a single strategy a number

[10] A detailed description and explanation of the Second Opportunity programme is presented in the next Chapter, focusing on the specific case studies.

of initiatives from different ministries and authorities to regenerate the area. The presidential delegate is supposed to engage with the different neighbourhoods and authorities, addressing topics such as housing, health, education, culture, infrastructure and security. In the words of the presidential delegate Hernán Ortega, in an interview for this research:

> The integral plan of BdM is a decision by this government that seeks to articulate different plans to improve the quality of life of BdM's residents, stimulating social integration, reducing inequalities, strengthening participation and boosting programmes and initiatives designed to ensure housing and neighbourhoods for a better quality of life, equipped and integrated territorially, and with more security (Ortega, 2014).

This is an ambitious plan that includes multiple dimensions and resources, and it is supposed to take care of the hitherto unresolved issues of the area. The scope and ambition of the plan reflect a shared diagnosis about the territory, and about the inability so far to generate significant improvements for the inhabitants of BdM and to challenge the massive inequalities experienced there. This is the issue we will review in the next section: seeking to understand the implications of living in BdM, exploring how economic, social and political inequalities are lived, created and reproduced in a territory socially and spatially segregated, whose main motor of change during the last 20 years has been pubic policies.

5.3 Inhabiting inequalities: Life displayed in Bajos de Mena

> A cubed sac pulsates with the din of its own overcrowding; a space where no-one can be alone, because each unhinged inhabitant in such madness resigns themself to sink in the promiscuous stew of the collective, self-annulment so as not to succumb, tightening their resolve in their tiny cells. In just a few square metres, where each movement triggers conflicts; traces of coexistence.
> (…)
> It looks like this sardine urbanism was planned to accentuate life's madness through mere human life accumulation, self-referential violence, by those at the margins in the allotment of urban space. It would seem that each birth, every hanging diaper that a new life supposes, were already stained with a tragic fate. All detergent, all the bleached advertising, and scrubbing are useless; as useless are

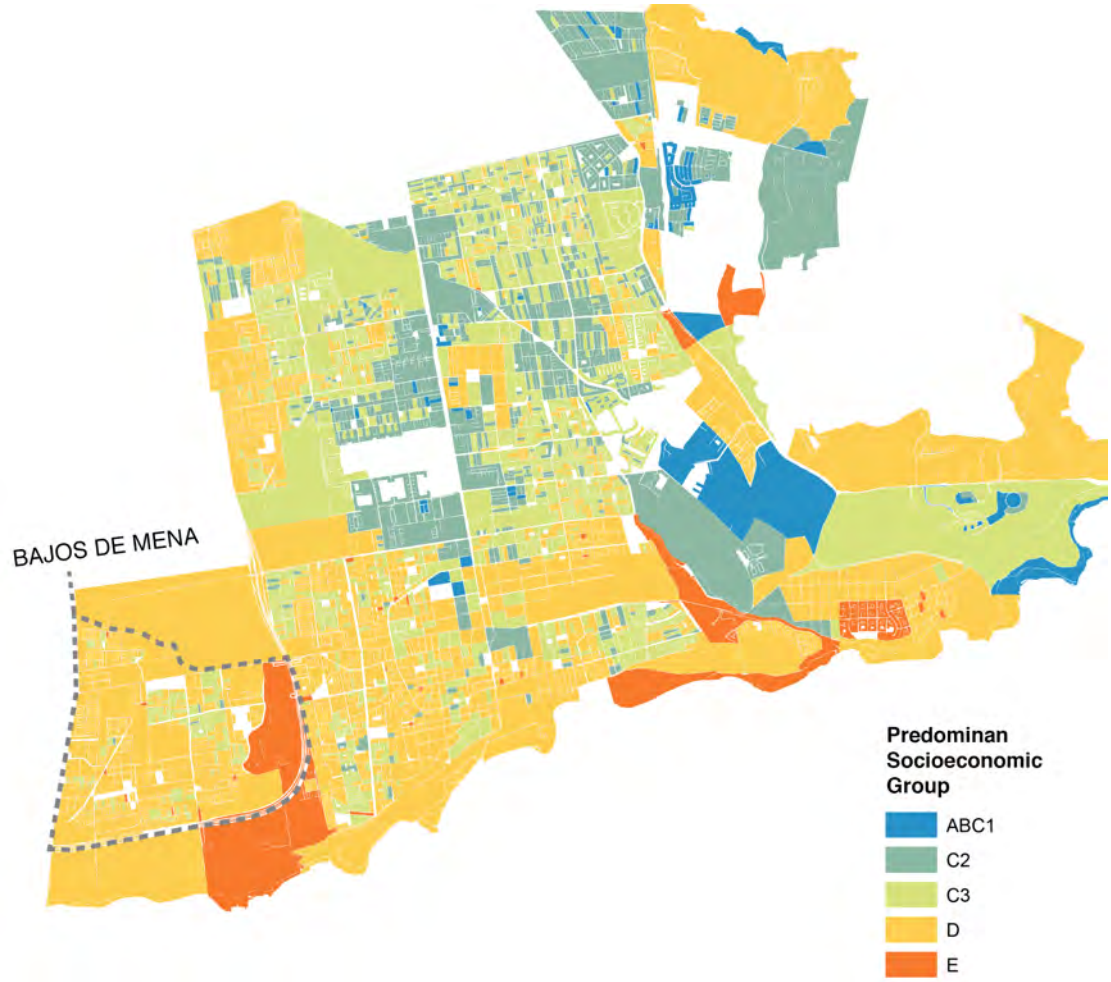
> the professional dreams for those back row kids (Fragment of "*La esquina es mi corazón (o los* New Kids *del bloque)*", Lemebel, 1995)[11].

The reality described by Lemebel could refer to any Social Condo (CCSS) in Chile, with their overcrowded landscapes of housing blocks. Even if the conditions of BdM could be labelled as exceptional, the life displayed there is a reality that extends to most Chilean cities, in which CCSS and other typologies of housing have been built using the same logic as in BdM.

The indicators about the precarious conditions of the BdM population are clear and strong, categorical and hard to refute: with most of the population from the lowest quintile, 70.8% of the inhabitants belong to the lowest socioeconomic groups D or E (Atisba, 2010), as shown in Figure 5.17. A high proportion of the population of BdM have criminal records, and according to the 2002 Census (Municipalidad de Puente Alto, 2005), 13.2% of the adult population are unemployed; most of those in work are unqualified; almost a quarter of the population (27,523 dwellers) are economically inactive, with 59.2% of them being engaged in household activities; the average number of years of schooling of the heads of households is 9 years for men and 8 years for women. BdM is the area within Puente Alto with the highest rate of young people aged between 15 and 17 that have not finished primary education (14%), and the second highest rate of teenage motherhood: 18% of young women aged between 15 and 19 are mothers; it is the area of Puente Alto with the highest number of households with no access to personal computers (92.2%), and just 2.2% of the households have access to the Internet.

[11] Translation by Thomas Aston; original text in Spanish:
"Una bolsa cúbica que pulsa su hacinamiento ruidoso donde nadie puede estar solo, porque el habitante en tal desquicio, opta por hundirse en el caldo promiscuo del colectivo, anulándose para no sucumbir, estrechando sus deseos en las piezas minúsculas. Apenas un par de metros en que todo desplazamiento provoca fricciones, roces de convivencia.
(…)
Pareciera que dicho urbanismo de cajoneras, fue planificado para acentuar por acumulación humana el desquicio de la vida, de por sí violenta, de los marginados en la repartición del espacio urbano.
Pareciera entonces que cada nacimiento en uno de estos bloques, cada pañal ondulante que presupone una nueva vida, estuviera manchado por un trágico devenir. Parecieran inútiles los detergentes y su alba propaganda feliz, inútil el refregado, inútiles los sueños profesionales o universitarios para estos péndex de última fila."

Figure 5.17 | Predominant Socio Economic Group per block in Puente Alto



Source: Author, based on data of the Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

Considering the shortcomings of BdM in terms of facilities and connectivity, anyone reading these figures would easily arrive at a conclusion as categorical as the data itself: that the population of BdM is a clear example of the high levels of inequality in the country. But what do these indicators mean for everyday life? How are inequalities lived, reproduced and built in the territory? It is hard to capture with statistics and indicators the life displayed in the blocks that Pedro Lemebel so sharply describes in his text. Hereinafter, we will try to show some of the ways in which economic, social and political inequalities are lived in the territory, understanding that housing, neighbourhoods and the built environment are not just the scenario or landscape where inequalities take place, but are a constitutive part of the reproduction of them (Harvey, 1973; Soja, 1989; Lobao et al., 2007). So the experience of the territory can sometimes shed more light on the materiality of inequalities than a set of statistics. Then, we will explore this issue through

personal stories rather than indicators, narratives about life rather than big data. Firstly, we will explore the way in which people earn a livelihood in the face of economic inequalities. Then we focus on social inequalities and their display in the territory using in particular the lenses of the household structure and violence. And finally, we will reflect on political inequalities, and how they are shaped by the presence of networks of assistant and clientelism in the territory.

5.3.1 Livelihoods: Practices to resist economic inequalities

It is impossible to detach life in BdM from the daily efforts that its residents make to generate livelihoods: either through formal or informal economic networks, through activities more or less regulated, sporadic or permanent, the inhabitants of BdM must seek every day to find the means to pay for basic services, for the transport costs of their children who study outside BdM, for improving their homes, for retail debts, or to have enough savings to apply for a house through a housing committee.

It is Saturday morning and the main road of Villa Marta Brunet is dominated as it is every weekend by the market, where residents come along to buy vegetables and groceries, where the community leaders or *dirigentes* take the opportunity to talk to the neighbours, and where people like Susana[12] work as *coleros,* selling second hand clothes and other objects on the edge of the market. Susana arrived at Marta Brunet to join her daughter Luisa after she had her second baby. Luisa cannot take care of the babies as she has health issues and problems related to drug consumption. Susana had moved as a tenant to El Volcán, but she left her flat there and moved to Marta Brunet to save money and to take care of Luisa and her new family.

Lorena is another resident that, like Susana, left her 42sqm flat in El Volcán, but in very different circumstances: for more than 12 years she lived there, first as an informal *tomadora,* and then in five different housing units that were designated temporarily while she arranges with a group of *dirigentas*[13] to set up a housing committee, in order to get a definitive solution outside El Volcán. In 2015, she moved permanently to her new

[12] As explained in Chapter 3, all names used in this chapter are fictional to protect the privacy of people; all testimonies were collected between 2014 and 2015.
[13] *Dirigenta(s)* is the female form of the word *Dirigente(s).*

55.6sqm house in the neighbourhood of Jesús de Nazaret, a new neighbourhood within BdM. For many years, Lorena has had a small grocery shop, and two years ago she got a loan from the *Fondo Esperanza* programme, that she needs to pay back monthly. Before moving to her new house, Lorena had to move her shop each time she moved within El Volcán, each time losing part of the investment she had made in it. So being in this new house reassures her, as she will be able to invest in the business with more security for the future, and the new location is also better in relation to potential customers. Even though Lorena's husband works in the construction sector outside BdM, she looks for ways to generate extra earnings, with her shop and selling Avon Products occasionally. Eight people live in her house, and everyone has to contribute in some way, except for the two youngest girls, who go to school, and Lorena's father, who is old and has health and alcohol problems.

Mónica, meanwhile, lives in the villa Francisco Coloane, one of the areas under demolition for the Second Opportunity programme. Today is the official day to vacate her block, and so she asked for a letter from the SERVIU to give to her employer in order to have a day off. Mónica has worked for five years as part of the cleaning staff for an office located in the Parque Arauco Shopping Mall, in the district of Las Condes, and the daily commute takes her around two hours each way. While Mónica is waiting for the final certificate outside her block, José, the son of one of her neighbours, has climbed to the top of the block on the third floor to get some of the wooden trusses. Despite the risk of being there, exposed to the height and the asbestos, he can then sell the trusses for CL$10,000 each (around £12) in the Chiloé neighbourhood, and so the risk is worth it.

In the neighbourhood of Chiloé, next to the demolitions, lives Paulina. She devotes her time mainly to her work as a full time *dirigenta,* and she describes herself as 'maintained by her husband', who works in the mining sector and travels every other week to the north of Chile. Anyway, Paulina sews textile accessories for bathrooms, and sells them to some of her neighbours to get some extra earnings. One of her children is studying at university, and whenever she can she helps him with some money to pay for a collective taxi to the underground station in the centre of Puente Alto and so save some time commuting.

The list of stories could keep growing, with diverse realities that share some common conditions: economic precariousness is addressed through a system of economic activities and livelihoods that weave a complex but productive fabric, sometimes very fragile. Tenure insecurity for the *tomadores,* tenants and *allegados,* as well as depreciation of the housing, deepen this precariousness.

Markets or *ferias libres* are probably the most significant productive unit in the territory[14], as spaces of social and commercial exchange. *Ferias libres* are found in most cities in the country, across different socioeconomic groups, but it is in the most vulnerable sectors where they play a key economic and social role, partially because of the lack of larger and more formal retail facilities (Greene et al., 2008). The location of the markets in the territory usually follows patterns of spatial efficiency, generating clear areas of influence and local economic systems (Mora, 2003). In BdM, *ferias* follow this logic and, as could be expected, they play a much wider role than just being a product exchange hub: they give space to informal trade through the installation of *coleros,* and become a space of social encounter. As economic and social units, markets are also a reflection of the way in which this territory operates sometimes enclosed in itself, meaning that for many of the residents the rest of the city is seen as an alien terrain, in which the Municipality of Puente Alto is mentioned many times as the farthest horizon reachable, and in which for many of its inhabitants (particularly women, the youth, older people and children), leaving the borders of BdM is seen as a difficult and costly task. This issue links directly with the second dimension we will explore, related to the way in which social inequalities are displayed in the territory.

5.3.2 Household structure and violence: The display of social inequalities

Social inequalities find their main manifestation in unequal access to services, public goods, networks, opportunities, and the exercise of rights. The lack of access to social goods in BdM is clear, and this is because of its location, problems of connectivity, low quality of public goods and the shortage of services and opportunities in general. It is not

[14] This does not take into account networks of production and trade of illegal drugs, which play an important role in the economy in some networks within BdM, but the volume of which is hard to estimate.

surprising that the notion of *margin* of the rest of the city is constantly present in its residents, particularly among those who arrived at BdM in the last decade: "I arrived from San Miguel three years ago, and since I got here I want to leave"; "we used to live in La Bandera and we had to move here, we never liked it, but there was no other option"; or "I was in San Bernardo before, but I had to move here to help and support my daughter", are the kind of explanations usually given by those who arrived at BdM when it had already acquired a marginal identity. With a tone of lament they evoke the idea that you fall into this distant territory by chance rather than by choice.

The notion of *distance* from the rest of the city manifests itself in BdM in many concrete ways. For example, many important roads are incomplete, interrupted by private or public lots, and this is evidence of the complete absence of planning. However, the notion of *distance* manifests in many more spheres than the commuting time to the centre of the city or the difficulties of movement within BdM. Research conducted on BdM and other areas looking at the strategies used by young people to cope with hostile environments, has shown that *isolation* appears to be a commonly used strategy by young people, and this results in a reduction in the size and heterogeneity of their social networks (Hermansen et al., 2008). *Distance,* then, is not just physical, it also relates to the perception of the outside world as remote and different, and this probably constitutes the clearest manifestation of the social inequalities in the sector.

There are two lenses in particular that are key to unpacking this distance and its consequences in terms of social inequality: household structure and violence. Even if a gender perspective is inevitable as 52% of the households are headed by a woman, women make up more than 85% of the housing committees, and it is mostly women who stay in the territory during the day, this research focuses rather on the household structure; there is an extensive literature about the relation between gender inequality, urban development and housing (see Walker et al., 2013; Hannan, 2000; Varley, 2007; Bunt and Dowling, 2006; Levy, 1998), but while this research has highlighted the importance of gender as an issue, it has not been in a position to fully elaborate or explore this dimension, and has rather focused on understanding the household structure (where women play a key role), and its relation with social inequalities. On the other

hand, the logic of violence linked to crime and to the consumption and trade of drugs is crucial to an understanding of the display of inequalities in BdM. This has, in fact, been the main feature highlighted by the media and external actors in general (i.e., Pizarro, 2003), using caricatures in television such as the nickname *Puente Asalto* ('Puente Assault'), which is a wordplay on the name of the district.

The limited private space at home, either in the apartment blocks or the houses, is the primary space where social inequalities are manifested and deepened. Family structures vary considerably from one household to another, but some common patterns are found. There are large groups in which a core family shares the space with their children's new families, and where there is frequently a woman acting as a node for all the group. It is quite usual to find families in which all children sharing a house have the same mother, but not necessarily the same father, and in which not all the children of the present father actually live in the same house, and this is in the context of a country where 71.1% of children are born outside marriage (OECD, n.d.).

In Sonia's home, for example, in the neighbourhood of Marta Brunet, nine to ten people share the flat: Sonia and her husband, their three youngest children, two older daughters that are the children of Sonia and her previous partner, one of whom has a newborn baby; Sonia's father also lives in the same flat, and, from time to time, her daughter's partner, who is the father of the grandchild. Sonia has two more children that do not live with her: one is '*lost'*, in Sonia's words – lost in drugs or crime, with a violent partner, and from whom she only has news sporadically. The main reason why Sonia engages with her *lost* daughter is because of the grandchild, whom she tries to visit sometimes in the daughter's house in El Volcán, next to Marta Brunet. Meanwhile, Sonia's oldest son has '*turned good*': he studied for a career, he has a formal job nowadays and he lives in the district of La Cisterna in his own house. As he had been a good student since he was young, Sonia's family made an effort to send him to study at a better school outside BdM, paying the commuting costs needed to study further away.

Sonia's experience is not unusual. Children who got *lost* in drugs or who *turned good,* and the arrival of grandchildren are for many families the main motor for making decisions

about how to inhabit the territory, where to move or live, either because they want to ensure a better future for those children who *turned good,* because they do not want to move too far away from their grandchildren or because they need to take care of those who are *lost*. Gloria, for instance, has lived in Francisco Coloane since its construction in 1996, and has made the decision to sell her flat for demolition in the context of the Second Opportunity programme. It was a hard decision, as in that home she had witnessed the death of two of her sons, both of whom were teenagers with drug problems, and who committed suicide in the flat within two years of each other. It was difficult to leave the flat behind, and with it part of her personal history, but now her eldest daughter has her own child, so Gloria decided to join the programme of demolitions to look for a different future for her newborn grandchild.

Decisions made within the home are not just influenced by the family structure and the paths taken by children. The violence of the environment is also fundamental in shaping what happens inside the home, behind the front door and the fences. The idea that in BdM you can just live behind bars and fences is widely shared, and this has direct implications for the way people live in the area on a day-to-day basis, and how they relate to available public goods. This situation is even more extreme in the blocks, as described by a government official, "with blocked staircases, with a *no man's land* communal area, where no one takes care of anything; where you have to live behind bars on each floor, on each staircase, in each entrance… because you have such serious problems with crime".

Given the overcrowded spaces in which people live, it is logical to expect communal and public spaces to play a key role, and, as has been mentioned, the markets or *ferias libres* are essential in this sense. Public spaces like squares, however, usually cannot play an active role as public assets or social goods. Many of the planned squares are in reality wastelands, sometimes colonised by gangs, drug traffic networks or other crime. It is well known that public spaces are safer during the morning, and that after a certain time of day, when the gangs literally *wake up*, the spaces become more dangerous. In reality, as a *dirigenta* describes, the presence of trees and vegetation just makes things more dangerous, and the municipality has even been asked to remove plants in some squares. Nevertheless, despite the presence of wastelands and incomplete streets, some

communities have, through the work of their *dirigentes,* found spaces for coexistence and sharing in schools, sport places, community centres, churches, and sometimes in squares during certain times of the day. There is then a need to constantly elaborate strategies that allow residents to overcome constraints on the use of public spaces. As the results of previous research on the area describe:

> Residents do tend to elaborate strategies to replace those spaces or to ensure that they become useful for their own particular goals. As such, Bajos de Mena seems to be a good example of people adapting their daily lives to the limitations imposed by a public space that is not only dilapidated, but that has also been appropriated by youth gangs that make it unfit for other peoples' use (Hermansen et al., n.d.)

It is not surprising that the mood that prevails among the residents is distrust towards public goods in general. This disillusionment can be discerned in many conversations and encounters. The driver of the collective taxi is outraged because his son was assaulted and lost his student travel card, and even though his wife tells him to calm down, and that he should be grateful that nothing serious happened to the son, he cannot contain his anger and complains about some road works they are doing in Av. Santa Rosa: "What are they for? As if they could change anything". Victoria is an old woman, but moved a few months ago to BdM. She is tired and complains in the community centre that every night she wakes up with a start as six shots sound in the air. She learnt last week that this is a kind of internal sign used by the gangs that operate at night in her neighbourhood. Meanwhile, Fernanda is annoyed by the fact that they included football fields in the recently opened park Juan Pablo II. She thinks that the park has lost its purpose by including this kind of facility, and even though the park is green and well looked after by the municipality, with fences and security, she has decided not to go there again with her young daughters after a shooting took place a few Sundays ago. During the shooting a classmate of her youngest daughter, who is 7 years old, was injured in his face and even though he survived he will live with lifelong consequences.

Violence is itself a complex issue, hard to grasp without using caricatures and fake dichotomies between good and bad people, between victims and victimisers. Sometimes, stories such as "this new neighbourhood is populated just with good people, we didn't

allow any bad guy to move here", contrast with a reality much more complex that operates rather as a system, with networks that work at different levels and that impact the capacity of families to access public goods in many ways. When a young guy approach Paola, the neighbourhood *dirigenta*, to say that he is happy because he is applying for a job that does not ask for criminal records, Paola is genuinely happy – she does not judge him because of what he did before. She knows that she has children, friends and neighbours in similar situations. Another *dirigenta* will arrive at an empty lot and yell at the group of young guys there: "Hey, '*Dead Face'* I have told you not to come here with your pot on Sunday, you know kids come to practice sports at weekends!", hinting at the existence of more or less formal agreements for coexistence.

Even though it is difficult to go more deeply into this topic of conversation, it is understood that formal residents' organisations and illegal organisations in the territory must collaborate on some occasions to act as protection networks. Some *dirigentes* refer to the fact that in their own neighbourhoods they feel safer than anywhere else, because they know that there is a more or less implicit agreement of mutual respect and mutual care with *the kids*, as they call the members of drug gangs. This logic is not new, and has been at the core of the life in settlements for decades. Once again, Lemebel provides us with a sharp description of this, referring to the reality in the *Zanjón de la Aguada* in the 1950s:

> Out of this habitat arose a certain familiarity with crime. As, with any microcosm of society, however brutish, there are laws of brotherhood, and the 'skinheads' had them. It was some sort of moral catechism where you never assault a neighbour from sector. Moreover, out of these bonds of solidarity, it was their duty to help out when natural disasters blew of the roofs during windy nights (Lemebel, 2003:19)[15].

The protection and care networks are at the core of the topic we will review next, about political inequalities in BdM and the main obstacles to tackle them.

[15] Translation by Thomas Aston; original text in Spanish:
"Cierta familiaridad con el delito, producía esta sana convivencia. Porque como en toda microsociedad, por punga que sea, existen sus leyes de hermanaje y los "pelados" las tenían. Era una especie de catecismo moral no cogotear jamás a un vecino del sector. Y es más, era una obligación para ellos colaborar solidariamente en los desastres naturales que volaban las fonolas en las noches de ventoleras."

5.3.3 Political clientelism and assistance networks: Obstacles and means to tackle political inequality

The notion of privacy, violated by the *sardine urbanism* described by Lemebel, directly influences the way in which BdM residents inhabit the city. It is not just that private life is constantly exposed to the reality of overcrowding, but also that the shared precariousness and the distance to networks outside the territory generate a context in which the only way to face the multiple vulnerabilities is through the collective, through mutual help and assistance. The assistance networks in BdM are indispensable for daily life, and the *dirigentes*, most of them women, play a key role.

Walking alongside a *dirigenta* through the market in the street Reloj de Sol during a Saturday morning gives some idea of the wide range of aspects covered by this dependency. She tells an old woman to please remember that the system for getting an appointment with a doctor has changed, and she needs to call a new number to check her hip bones. "Make a note that I will give it to you", she says while looking at her diary. A few metres ahead another neighbour comes and asks her to come to one side, as she wants to tell her that she still has problems with water leaking from the flat above, and asks her to talk again to her neighbour so that he will fix it soon. In the next block, the *dirigenta* enters a small grocery shop and asks the daughter of the owner how she is dealing with her savings, as she needs to present all the completed paperwork to the housing committee in a few weeks' time. Another resident comes along later to ask for some support for problems with utility bills, and as soon as she leaves the *dirigenta* comments that the woman's son is ill. A man in his mid-twenties is waving from the other side of the street while happily shouting to her "Have you seen how well I have been behaving?!"

In many ways these residents' networks supplement the public sector or operate as a bridge to it. The loss of privacy seems like a small price to pay for various forms of assistance and security, even more so because private life has never been experienced in a different way, detached from these networks. *Dirigentes* undoubtedly play a key role in leveraging and addressing individual and collective interests, in looking for solutions and answers. They frequently take on the job of directing information and assistance to

corners that municipalities and public services cannot reach, and accompanying those who would otherwise be left without any kind of support.

Now, how is this related to political inequalities? Bearing in mind how relevant the work of the *dirigentes* is, it is worth asking how this kind of social structure based on assistance and precariousness generates a kind of dependency that in the long term has implications for the kind of political community created in the territory. In practice this dependency tends to model a social structure in which most decisions are in the hands of those who have access to information and networks. This happens at an individual level (for example *dirigentas* making decisions about the purchase of one house or another for their neighbours), but also happens at the collective level, and therefore shapes the political future and levels of participation of a community.

To understand this phenomenon it is necessary to understand the political context of this territory more broadly. Puente Alto in general and BdM in particular are territories that are highly contested politically. Being the biggest *comuna* of the country, Puente Alto is usually the scenario of key political and electoral battles. Power relationships between authorities at municipal (mayor), district (deputies) and constituency (senators) level are fundamental in Puente Alto, as they are controlled by different political parties. These tensions have a direct influence on the territory, through clientelism and the existence of areas of the city more or less conquered by some emblematic authorities of different political sectors. In practice, most *dirigentes* from BdM are implicitly or explicitly close to some authority, and this has direct consequences for the display of assistance, and the provision and support of some official programmes in the territory.

In that sense the *dirigentes* play the role of what the literature on clientelism has called *brokers* (Auyero, 2001; Arriagada, 2013; Stokes et al., 2013). They act as intermediaries between the *patron* (authorities) and the *client* (citizens), demonstrating clientelism in the territory as a form of social capital (Durston, 2005). These relationships are not based just on problem-solving networks, but are also about shared cultural representations (Auyero, 2001) and affective bonds (Arriagada, 2013).

The logic of clientelism is manifested in the territory through different mechanisms, probably the clearest being the sense of *property* of some neighbourhoods or initiatives: "In this neighbourhood we do not allow political advertising by these parties"; "these *dirigentas* 'belong' to this senator"; "we are against this programme and in favour of that one". These are the kind of explanations usually heard in BdM. And on the other side, it is common to hear from authorities and public officials that some areas, programmes or *dirigentes* are 'owned' by one or other authority.

Political inequalities manifest themselves mainly through unequal access to power and decision making about the collective direction of the territory. In that sense, clientelism and the networks described here have direct consequences at at least two levels: firstly, there are political decisions captured by motivations that emerge from outside the territory, very hard to contest from the local organisations of BdM, and modelling a political community in which it is extremely unlikely that a genuine processes of participation and empowerment will be triggered; and secondly, the notion of *sides* articulated by the authorities generates a climate of conflict that adds to an already violent atmosphere in the territory, with politically confrontational groups in BdM, between which the main differences do not necessarily come from ideological or programmatic disagreements, but rather as a result of the affiliation to certain public figures and their networks of assistance.

Possibly the context in which these tensions are most evident is the implementation of certain concrete programmes in the territory, which sometimes have increased conflicts and even resulted in episodes of violence. It seems as if networks of clientelism operate in a much wider context than just during election periods (Arriagada, 2013). For example, in the case of the Second Opportunity, as we will discuss in later chapters, the demolition of some blocks triggered an atmosphere of conflict between those residents that did not want to leave and the *dirigentes* who were pushing for the programme, even producing some episodes of verbal violence against residents, and physical violence against the houses. On the other side, many of the *dirigentes* promoting the Second Opportunity implementation, have actively opposed other initiatives such as the *Plan Integral* promoted by the new government.

Dependency, lack of autonomy in decision making, the difficulty of generating real participatory processes, and occasional violent conflicts, are all an aspect of the consequences of the clientelist networks that operate in BdM at different levels, and this hinders the task of reversing political inequalities. Even though these networks are based on mutual interest, they are founded on asymmetric access to power, and tend to consolidate these differences through what has been called a *structured* and *structuring* process with its own rules and trajectories (Auyero, 2001). So these networks are based on unequal access to power, precariousness and poverty. They emerge out of the concentration of needs, and the necessity of generating assistance networks, which are indispensable in a context in which inequalities are manifested in countless spaces and shortcomings that impregnate every aspect of life.

Final comments: A territory of lived inequalities

Nowadays there is a widely shared diagnosis about how unequal Chile is, and how segregated Santiago is. There is compelling evidence that supports this diagnosis. But this general judgement barely explains the multiplicity of ways in which these inequalities and exclusions are lived and experienced by those suffering them. This chapter has attempted to present the history and context of BdM, with special attention given to understanding how inequalities are lived day-to-day in a highly segregated territory in which housing policies have been one of the motors behind inequalities' consolidation.

By rebuilding the history of BdM and exploring day-to-day life in its neighbourhoods, this chapter has given an account of how the city is not just the landscape where inequalities are displayed, the background of economic and political problems, but rather plays a fundamental part in producing such problems. The city and the way in which we inhabit it generate spatial, social and political dynamics that can sustain and deepen inequalities. It is the spatial reality of houses, small and overcrowded, with poor construction and materials, that frequently prevents the development of residents. It is the organisation of public spaces, the incomplete streets, the lack of connectivity, the insecurity and the location of neighbourhoods that directly influence the way in which citizens relate to the opportunities in the rest of the city. It is the family structure and the

networks present in the territory that determine that certain groups, particularly women, face pitfalls in trying to develop more fully beyond the boundaries of the neighbourhoods. And it is the urban concentration of precariousness in an enclosed territory that sustains the political dynamics that deepens practices of clientelism, limiting the capacities of citizens for self-determination.

This suggests important challenges for territorial, urban and housing policies, particularly regarding their capacity to intervene neighbourhoods from an integral perspective, multi-sectorial and universalist, assessing achievements beyond what can be quantitatively measured. BdM has witnessed most of the various official attempts to create mechanisms for addressing these challenges, in more or less successful ways. The following chapters present and discuss the consequences in terms of inequality of two of these programmes.

CHAPTER 6

Programme Descriptions: The DS49 and Second Opportunity in BdM

Introduction

As explained earlier, this research focuses on housing programmes that incorporated elements of urban equality in their objectives and narratives, programmes that, in the eyes of the authorities and policy makers, would address problems of earlier housing policies in terms of qualitative deficit and urban equality. This chapter presents a description of the two case studies conducted as part of this research, both located in the BdM area.

The two programmes are the Basic Housing Programme DS49 and its implementation in the neighbourhood Jesús de Nazaret, and the Second Opportunity Programme and its implementation in the neighbourhoods of Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado. While the first of these is a programme that involves continuity of the traditional policies of production of new houses, updated to the current standards of the SERVIU, the second one represents a new kind of intervention in the territory, based on the demolition of housing stock and the provision of subsidies for the owners. Both policies have been implemented in other territories in the country, but have particular features in their execution in BdM that will be discussed in this chapter.

In each case, this chapter first presents a more general description of the programme, its national scope, and its main features and characteristics, and then it describes more specifically the implementation in BdM, as well as the context of the specific neighbourhoods involved. This is a descriptive chapter that will serve to support the analysis and findings described in Chapter 7.

6.1 Case 1 | Basic Housing Programme DS49: Construction of new houses in Jesús de Nazaret

6.1.1 Basic Housing Programme DS49: A state that subsidises new houses

Since the 1980s, different housing instruments have focused on subsidising the construction of basic housing solutions. As described in Chapter 4, these programmes have evolved and changed over time, with changes to the structure of the subsidies, the spatial and financial requirements, but preserving the nature of the policies in terms of the role of private, public and civil society actors. Then, all of them limit the role of the state to the provision of subsidies and regulation, on occasions participating in the design through the SERVIU, but leaving in private hands the production, spatial decisions, construction and management of new houses. As part of this series of policies, the Supreme Decree 49 (DS49) was promulgated in 2012 as the latest version of the instruments for subsidising basic housing, under the name Solidary Fund for Housing Choice (*Fondo Solidario de Elección de Vivienda*).

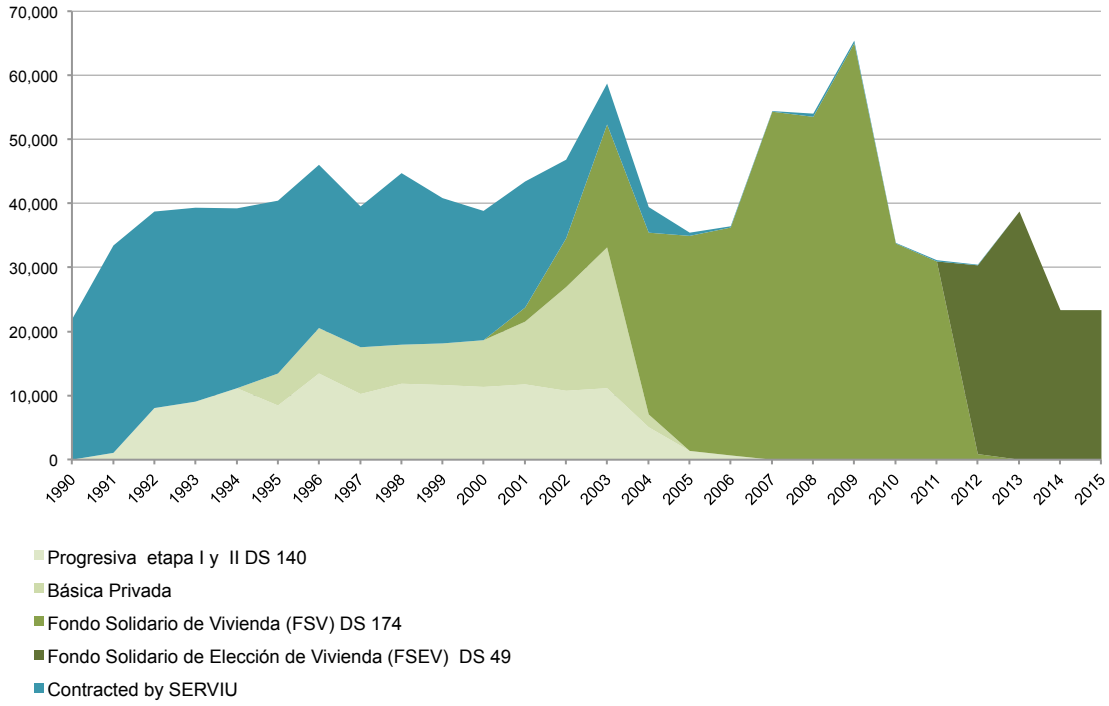
The series of policies that have since 1990 focused on providing housing units to vulnerable urban groups are summarised in Figure 6.1, which shows the number of units subsidised each year by the state using the different tools available. As the chart shows, during the last ten years subsidies for buying or building houses for vulnerable urban groups have been unified into a single instrument, and the model of housing contracted directly by the SERVIU has disappeared, being replaced by subsidy instruments.

The DS49 programme focuses on providing subsidies to poor families, whose score in the Social Protection Record (FPS – *Ficha de Protección Social*) is below 8,500 points. Families need to have savings of at least 10 UF[16], and there is no need for them to take out a loan in order to get a house. The programme allows people to buy new or used houses and to build houses in either densification or extension schemes. The base subsidy

[16] In March 2017, 10 UF = £328.2.

is 380 UF and this can be increased up to 950 UF[17], including an allocation subsidy for urban areas or a feasibility subsidy for rural areas. Special subsidies can complement these amounts, such as subsidies for social integration, for disabled people, for big family groups, for facilities or for densification (MINVU, n.d).

Figure 6.1 | Subsidies allocated yearly for vulnerable urban groups (reconstruction subsidies excluded)



Source: Author, based on data of MINVU

The DS49 was promulgated in April 2012 as part of the changes to housing programmes during the government of Sebastián Piñera, which unified a series of instruments into just two: the DS1 for emerging and middle-class groups, and the DS49 for vulnerable groups. The main changes in the DS49 in comparison with its predecessor, the FSV1, was the incorporation of individual applications and not just collective ones, and the elimination of the requirement for a Social-Estate Management Body (EGIS), which was replaced by the *Entidades Patrocinantes*. But the DS49 is mainly a policy that represents continuity.

[17] In March 2017, 380 UF = £12,464 and 950 UF = £31,160

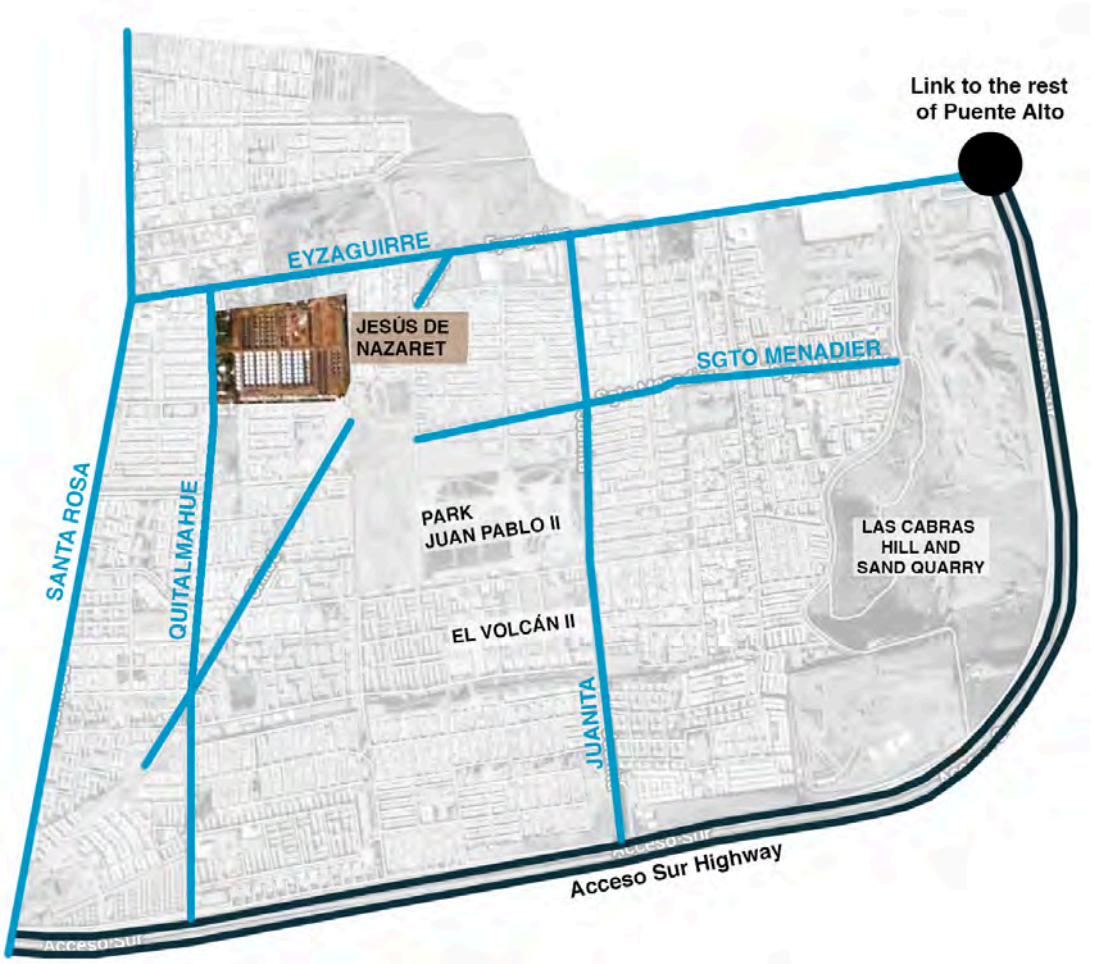
For the construction of new housing, the DS49 has four modalities: construction in new plots, construction of small condos, construction in a plot owned by the beneficiary, and construction of urban densification. It also has the modality of purchasing a used house. In all these cases, houses built or purchased with a subsidy from this programme need to meet a series of criteria detailed by the SERVIU, which include technical standards, a defined number of rooms, and a minimum size of 42sqm for houses and 55sqm for flats. Through the incorporation of higher standards in terms of social support provided by the EGIS before, during and after the construction, as well as through higher technical requirements for the construction, the programme seeks to accomplish the general mandate of the Ministry of Housing in terms of urban equality.

As the main financial instrument for the production of basic housing, the DS49 adopts a variety of forms and schemes, with projects of different sizes and typologies. In a sense, this can be considered a financial instrument rather than a proper housing policy. This is the view of many of those interviewed for this research who were critical of the Chilean housing model. As the urbanist and academic Alfredo Rodriguez points out in his interview, "housing policies in Chile are thought out and designed in terms of subsidies, decrees, and programmes as seen by economists; everything is very abstract, all the discussion is about the amount of UFs, something that doesn't exist" (Rodriguez, 2014).

6.1.2 Jesús de Nazaret: New houses in a contested territory

This research focused on Jesús de Nazaret, a neighbourhood built under the DS49 programme with a very particular trajectory in the context of the BdM history. Jesús de Nazaret was built in what used to be an empty plot at the north of BdM, next to two important avenues: Eyzaguirre on the north border of BdM, and Quitalmahue, which crosses BdM from north to south (Figure 6.2). The plot was originally private, and was left empty, surrounded by multiples social housing developments that took place in the area over the last two decades. The plot was developed by an EGIS called *El Canelo Ltda.*, and the houses were built by the construction company Bio Bio S.A., a company that was established several decades ago and that has participated in the construction of many public and housing projects.

Figure 6.2 | Location of Jesús de Nazaret



Source: Author

The neighbourhood is composed of 547 units. The units are two-storey, semi-detached houses, each of which has a total floor area of 55.6sqm, including a communal area, kitchen, bathroom and three bedrooms (Figure 6.4). Eight units are specially designed for people with disabilities, and these are single-storey houses each with a total area of 59.5sqm.

Figure 6.3 | Layout of Jesús de Nazaret

Source: Information provided by SERVIU

Figure 6.4 | Typology of houses Jesús de Nazaret (two semi-detached houses)

Source: Information provided by SERVIU

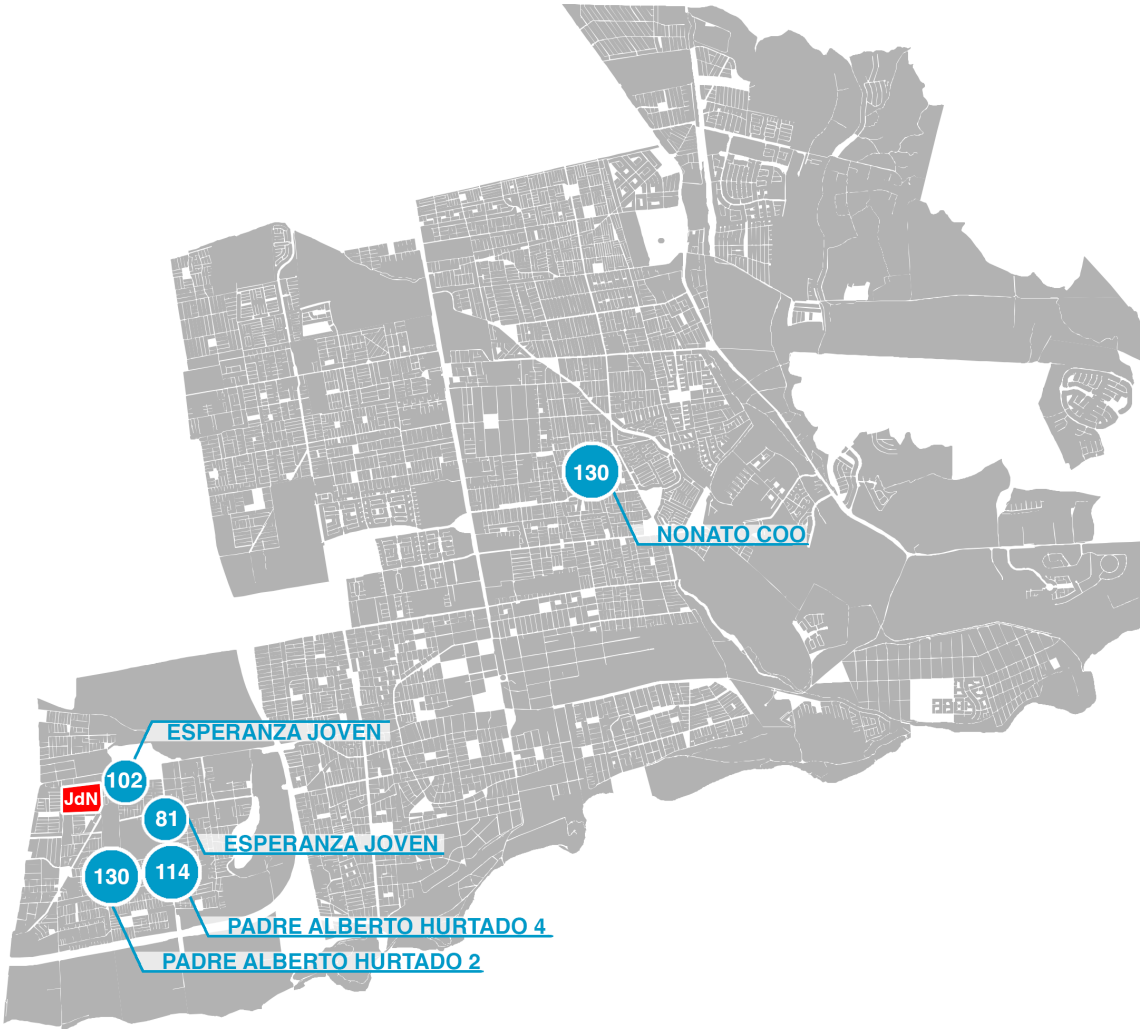
Jesús de Nazaret provides houses for a total of 547 families in five different areas, named alphabetically from A to E as shown in Figure 6.3. Houses have been allocated to people from five different housing committees, all from the *comuna* of Puente Alto, and most of them from the BdM area (see Table 6.1 and Figure 6.5).

Table 6.1 | Housing committees, plots and former neighbourhoods of the majority of families

Area	Main Housing Committee	Families
Plot A	Esperanza Joven	81 families from La Cañamera (BdM)
Plot B	Padre Alberto Hurtado 2	130 families from El Volcán (BdM)
Plot C	Nonato Coo	130 families from Nonato Coo and Casas Viejas
Plot D	Esperanza Joven	102 families from Santa Elvira (BdM)
Plot E	Padre Alberto Hurtado 4	114 families from El Volcán (BdM)

Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU

Figure 6.5 | Origin of families moved to Jesús de Nazaret. Locations in Puente Alto



Source: Author

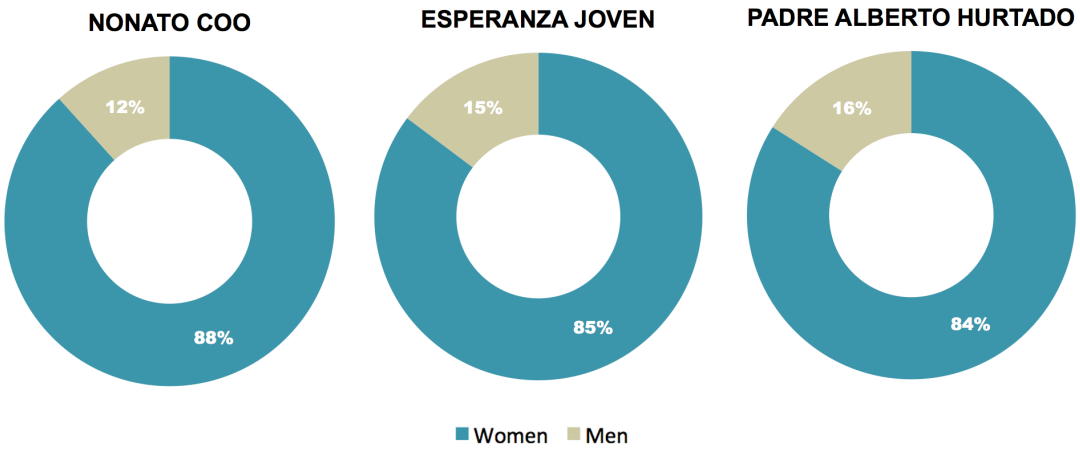
The committees are *Nonato Coo*, *Esperanza Joven* (2 committees) and *Padre Alberto Hurtado* (2 committees). According to information provided by the EGIS, *Nonato Coo* is a committee that was legally formalised in 2007, mainly with families from different neighbourhoods of Puente Alto: Casas Viejas, Nonato Coo and Santa Elvira, the latter located within the BdM area. It has a total of 120 members, 88% of whom are women, and the president of the committee is also a woman. 40% of the families have a woman as a head of household, and 23% of the women work on a permanent basis, while 26% work informally or occasionally. Most of the men work in the construction sector. The families are mainly *allegados*, meaning that they are living with relatives while waiting for a housing solution.

The second committee is *Esperanza Joven*, which was legally registered in 2006, with families from the La Cañamera sector, an old landfill site within BdM, recently transformed into a public park. In 1972 a group of families occupied this land, but it was only in 1996 that they received proper sanitation facilities. As with the previous committee, most of the members are *allegados,* and the members' average age is very young: 36.5 years. 85% of the members are women, and 43% of the members have had a full school education. In terms of occupation, 25% of women have a permanent job, 23% occasional jobs, and 36% describe themselves as unemployed.

The third committee is *Padre Alberto Hurtado,* legally registered in 2008. Most of the members come from El Volcán II, one of the most emblematic neighbourhoods of BdM. 84% of the members of the committee are women. Out of the 96 female heads of households, 18% have a permanent job. This committee is particularly emblematic in political and social terms, given the symbolic historical role of El Volcán II.

Even though each committee comes from a different background and geographical location, all three committees share some common characteristics, such as the duration of the process from their legal constitution to the delivery of houses, which in each case took between eight and ten years, and the predominance of women as committee members (Figure 6.6). This is and has been a common trend in housing struggles in Chile for decades.

Figure 6.6 | Percentage of women in each housing committee of Jesús de Nazaret



Source: Author, based on data provided by EGIS El Canelo

Every housing committee has a complex story behind it, and it would probably be impossible to find an example of a collective housing struggle without a long list of difficult events, challenges, in many cases full of suffering and precariousness. Nevertheless, some collective stories are more symbolic than others, as they involve a concentration of abuse, violence and extreme negligence. Undoubtedly, the story behind the housing committees from El Volcán is one of these, and to fully understand the implementation of the DS49 in Jesús de Nazaret it is necessary to appreciate the background of families arriving in the new neighbourhood from El Volcán II.

As was described in Chapter 5, El Volcán is the most emblematic area of BdM not just because of the infamous outbreak of flooding in 1997 and the enormous levels of violence and stigmatisation in the area, but also because since 2008 it has been under demolition, becoming a political and social symbol of the failure of a policy that had focused just on decreasing the quantitative housing deficit. As part of the multiple movements that have taken place in El Volcán during the last decade, the constitution of housing committees has been key to providing collective answers to families. The construction within BdM of the *Mi Barrio Mi Familias* and *Jesús de Nazaret* districts are part of the efforts to allocate families from El Volcán within BdM.

Table 6.2 | Families from El Volcán II in Jesús de Nazaret

Plot	Total Number of families	Families from El Volcán II	Percentage of families from El Volcán II
A	81	2	2,4 %
B	130	117	90 %
C	120	10	8,3 %
D	102	2	1,9 %
E	114	90	78,9 %
TOTAL	**547**	**221**	**40,4 %**

Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU

As shown in the Table 6.2, Jesús de Nazaret provides housing solutions for 221 families coming from El Volcán. In 2012, an official cadastre was conducted as a coordinated effort of the community leaders of El Volcán, the municipality and the Metropolitan SERVIU, defining the beneficiaries of the project. By 2012, 28% of the houses in Jesús

de Nazaret were supposed to be allocated to families from El Volcán, but this percentage increased to 35% in June 2014, and to 40% in its final distribution.

As one of the *dirigentas* from El Volcán describes, even though their committee was legally constituted in 2008, their struggle to move out of El Volcán in search of a *vivienda digna* (decent housing) started much earlier. She arrived at El Volcán in 2003, 12 years before she moved to Jesús de Nazaret, when the neighbourhood was already highly stigmatised and had high levels of violence, concentration of poverty and vulnerabilities. When she arrived she occupied a flat illegally, and as soon as she got to the area her family struggled for a different housing solution:

> It was hard, because we were going to be evicted by the police; the mayor at that time, Mr Manuel José Ossandón, came and formalised the occupations, and then we started with the committees. Then they were supposed to demolish El Volcán, because it was a labyrinth, there were drugs, gunshots, everything; well, still there are… They moved me and I started renting in Estación San Eugenio, within El Volcán, I never left El Volcán until now. Then they gave me a different house, on the ground floor, with a big garden, and then they announced they would start demolishing El Volcán. So then we started organising ourselves, fighting and fighting to find a new plot… but life in El Volcán was tough, hard, and dangerous; I suffered a lot.

Her personal story and those of others reveal a series of important facts: while living in El Volcán, families faced constant interventions from various authorities, evictions and changes that in some cases increased their perception of precariousness. As another former *dirigenta* from El Volcán who recently moved to Jesús de Nazaret says:

> In El Volcán I had five changes: as a tenant, an illegal occupant, then in an assigned flat, another assigned flat, then what was supposed to be the definitive flat, and then they change me to a different area, and then they return me to the other one (…) I went through the whole of El Volcán with the changes, and each time I lost many things; I lost furniture, rooms, I had two 3x6m rooms in the backyard of one of the flats, and I lost them.

As well as the threat of the imminent demolition, these stories of precariousness and instability were key for the formation of the committees. As one of the *dirigentas* points out: "we started demanding that we wanted a *vivienda digna*, we wanted to leave El

Volcán, that was not a good quality of life for our children, and neither was it for us. So even if we were moved within El Volcán, we started fighting again". One aspiration commonly found in members of housing committees from El Volcán or *allegados* of other neighbourhoods is the desire to leave a flat to move to a house, ideally a two-storey house. In that sense, Jesús de Nazaret represents the manifestation of many of the dreams of its residents.

As can be expected, this long story of struggles and suffering in El Volcán has a direct consequence for the way *dirigentas* and inhabitants of Jesús de Nazaret have approached the new neighbourhood, particularly because El Volcán and Jesús de Nazaret are so different. Also, many of them still have networks in the El Volcán area, as some of the *dirigentas'* sons, daughters and relatives are still there waiting for another solution, and some of the children in Jesús de Nazaret still go to school in El Volcán. This means that many of them visit the area quite often, and their perception of Jesús de Nazaret cannot be detached from their emotional bonds with El Volcán. As one of the *dirigentas* says: "yesterday I went to El Volcán again and I looked at what used to be my flat, and that made me so sad, because there were so many years of struggle, of effort, sacrifice, crying, with anger, fighting, thousands of things that we went through as *dirigentas.* But we made it".

As we will review in the next chapter, this strong relationship with El Volcán will be key to understanding the construction of Jesús de Nazaret and its implications for family life and for the territory more generally.

Figure 6.7 | Jesús de Nazaret: Pictures of the neighbourhood prior to arrival of residents

Source: Provided by SERVIU

6.2 Case 2 | Second Opportunity: Demolishing Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado

6.1.2 Second Opportunity: Demolishing a housing policy

El Volcán became nationally recognised as the first official demolition of housing ordered by the government, destroying houses built only a decade earlier by the same state. Therefore it became a symbol of the official acknowledgement of the failure of one way of conceiving housing policies. It was, however, with the implementation of the Second Opportunity programme that the strategy of demolitions moved away from the exceptional and almost anecdotal case of El Volcán, to became a national programme. This programme had aspirations of becoming a systematic effort to deal with the qualitative deficit in housing units built during the 1990s, which had been widely criticised by various academic voices during the years since they had been built (Ducci, 2000; Rodríguez and Sugranyes, 2004; Sabatini et al., 2001, 2008; Salcedo, 2010).

The new generation of policies that has emerged during the last decade and has focused on tackling the qualitative deficit and reverting the processes of ghettoisation in some neighbourhoods, focused mainly on recovering public spaces (e.g. the PQMB), on giving subsidies for housing refurbishment (e.g. the PPPF), and in general on recovering the physical and social fabric of the most vulnerable and degraded areas of Chilean cities. During Sebastián Piñera's government, however, the informally named *Second Opportunity* programme started, addressing in principle the same problems as other programmes but with a very different strategy: removing families from vulnerable areas, and literally demolishing the housing blocks that the state had built less than two decades before. The programme operated through the acquisition and demolition of apartments, seeking "to start a process of integral regeneration of the buildings and their surroundings" (MINVU, 2013a).

During the first implementation of the Second Opportunity, the programme worked as a pilot in specific areas where groups of family living in the same building could voluntarily organise and sell their units to the state, receiving a voucher to buy a new house. This

programme was implemented as a pilot in 2013 in Social Condos (CCSS) located in 4 *comunas* in the country[18], two of them located in Santiago, and, not coincidentally, one of the pilot cases was in BdM, which had already witnessed demolitions in El Volcán.

The operation of the programme, which was and still is run by the SERVIU, worked as follows. Within the four designated areas, groups of families that own properties in the same block can voluntarily join the programme if 95% of the owners of the apartments in a block agree (MINVU, 2013b). Based on an official appraisal of the properties, the state buys the apartments through an expropriation, adding a top-up subsidy to make 700 UF[19]. The owners can decide to give up the subsidy and get the amount of the expropriation in cash if they want to buy a property outside the SERVIU system, and if they own a second property somewhere else, they are forced to receive just the expropriation amount, without the extra subsidy. In addition to this, those who inhabit the property receive a 46 UF[20] voucher for the transfer, which is also used sometimes for a transition home. Once the subsidies are assigned and the paperwork is ready, the blocks are emptied, and then SERVIU is in charge of the demolition. Because during its first implementation it was a voluntary process, the development of the empty plots after the demolition was decided case by case, and did not relate to an urban plan. To date, all the plots of demolished buildings in BdM are either empty or awaiting to finish the demolition. The destination of the removed families is not part of the programme, and families who did not join the demolition programme were not considered 'beneficiaries' of it.

The above description may sound like a very straightforward process, but in practice the programme was full of anomalies. Or, as one of the coordinators in the field said, his task was "to coordinate what cannot be coordinated". Also, it was a pilot programme with a lot of political pressure to deliver results in the short term, so many of the decisions and institutional instruments were improvised. Some of the government officials and

[18] The four areas of the pilot implementation of the Second Opportunity programme are: the neighbourhoods Nuevo Horizonte II and Brisas del Mar, in the city of Viña del Mar; the neighbourhood Vicuña Mackenna, in the city of Rancagua; the neighbourhood of Parinacota, in the district of Quilicura in Santiago; and the neighbourhoods of Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado, in the district of Puente Alto also in Santiago.
[19] In March 2017, 700 UF = £22,960.
[20] In March 2017, 46 UF = £1,508.

authorities interviewed for this research made accusations of improvisation, lack of systematisation of the work, and an execution that was full of inconsistencies and therefore very difficult to scale-up and sustain over time. As one of them put it: "it has been exception, after exception, after exception, after exception to the laws".

The only legal instrument of the programme is a five-pages document (MINVU, 2013b) that allows families to access public subsidies for a second time during their lives under certain conditions. Therefore, it needs to use instruments from the existing policy tools, namely, the expropriation law that has existed since 1978, and the housing subsidies provided by the DS49, the standard programme for the provision of vouchers for purchasing social housing.

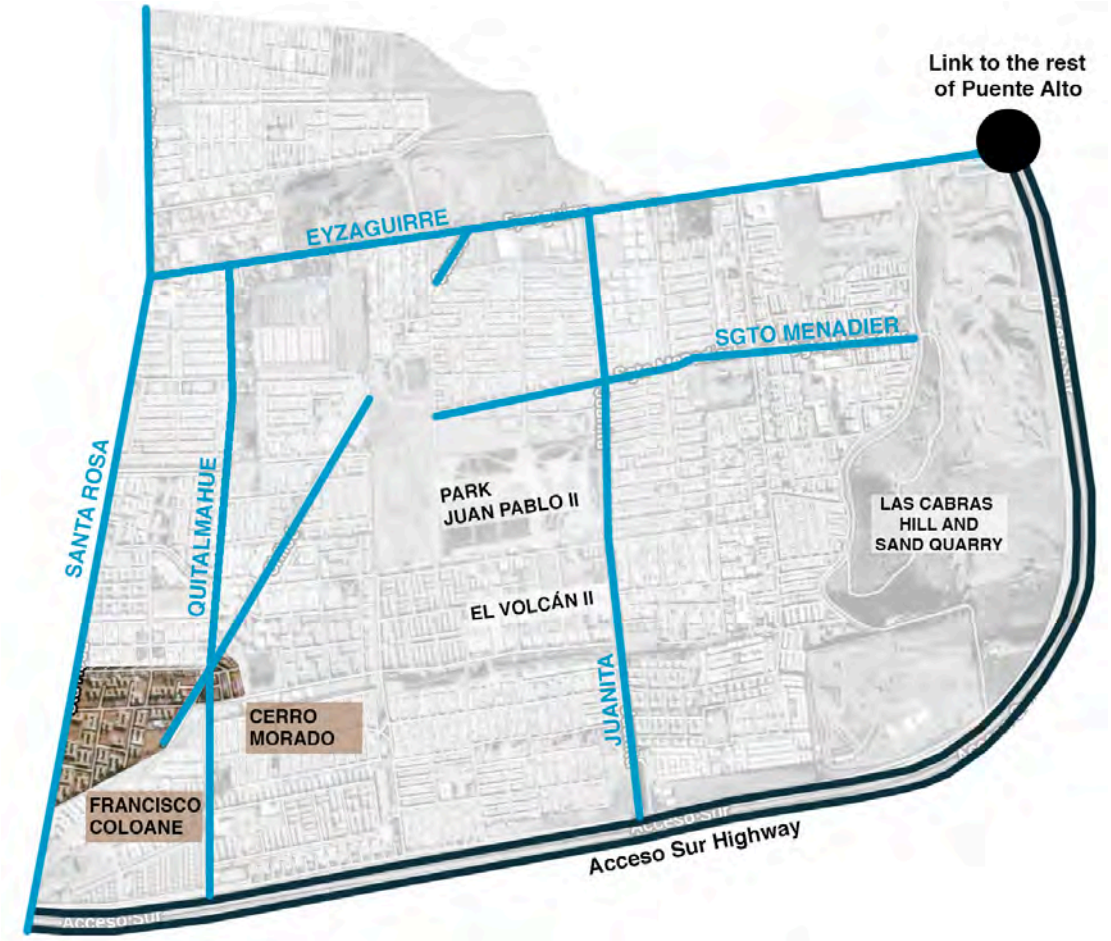
6.2.2 Second Opportunity in BdM: Cerro Morado and Francisco Coloane

In 2013 the first invitation to the residents ('First Call') for the Second Opportunity programme arrived at BdM, and its implementation concluded during 2016. This First Call took place in two neighbourhoods or *villas:* Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado. After the implementation of the Second Opportunity, during 2015, the new government initiated a major revision for the next implementation of the Second Opportunity programme. The analysis of this research, however, focuses only on the First Call of the programme that started in 2013.

Cerro Morado and Francisco Coloane are two Social Condos located in the south west of the BdM area (Figure 6.8) and they were built during the 1990s. Both were typologies designed by the SERVIU, and allocated through bids to construction companies. Their typology is that of traditional housing developed during that decade by the SERVIU, similar to El Volcán and most of the Social Condos built in the country during that era: three-storey buildings with external stairs. In BdM alone, there are 18 neighbourhoods built following this typology, all of them contracted by the SERVIU and allocating homes to hundreds of families[21].

[21] Some of the Social Condos in BdM: Caleuche; Cerro Morado; Francisco Coloane; Mamiña I and II; Marta Brunet; Pedro Lira Rencoret; Quitalmahue; San Miguel; Sargento Menadier; El Volcán Norte; El Volcán I, II and III.

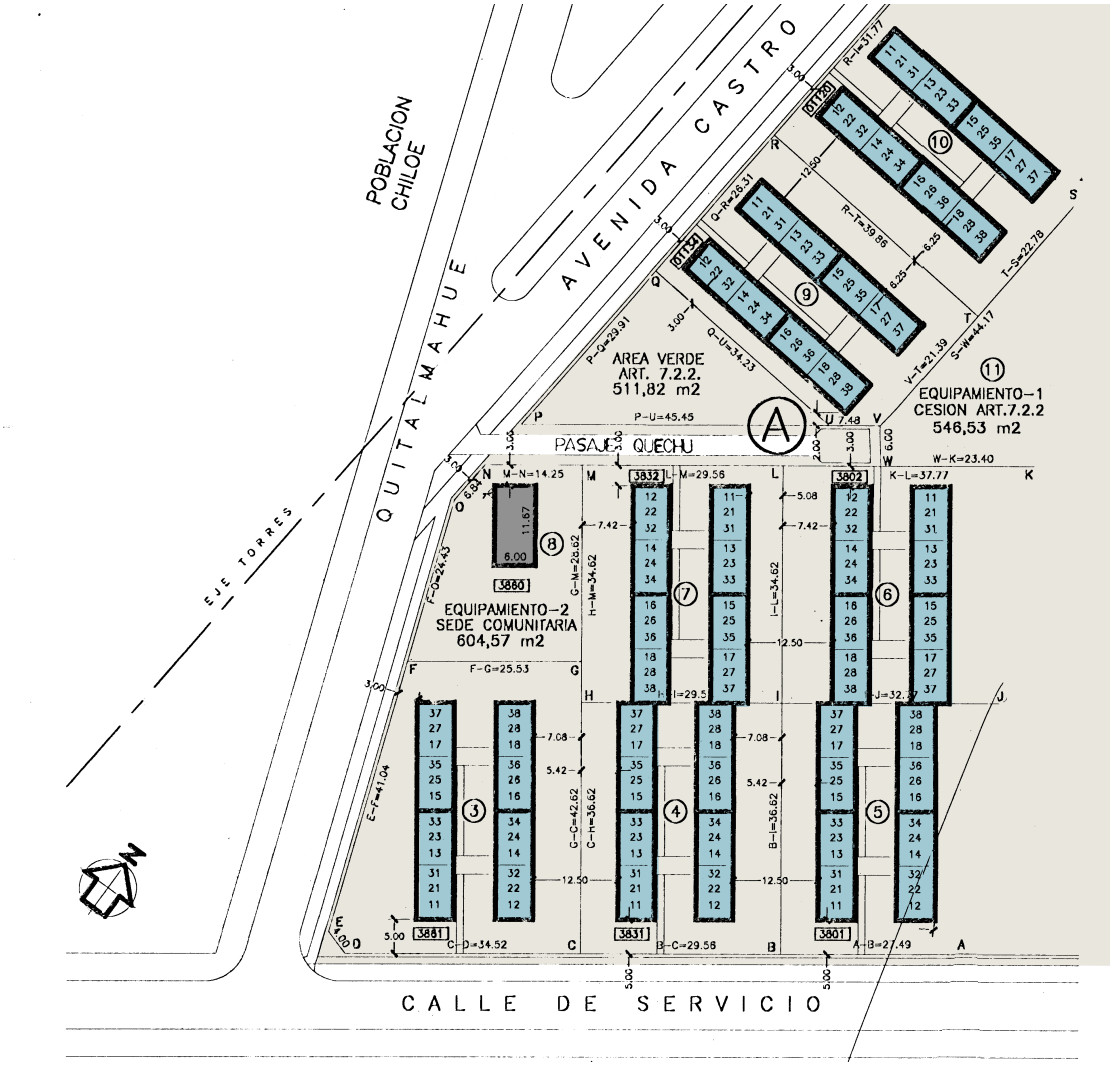
Figure 6.8 | Location of Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado



Source: Author

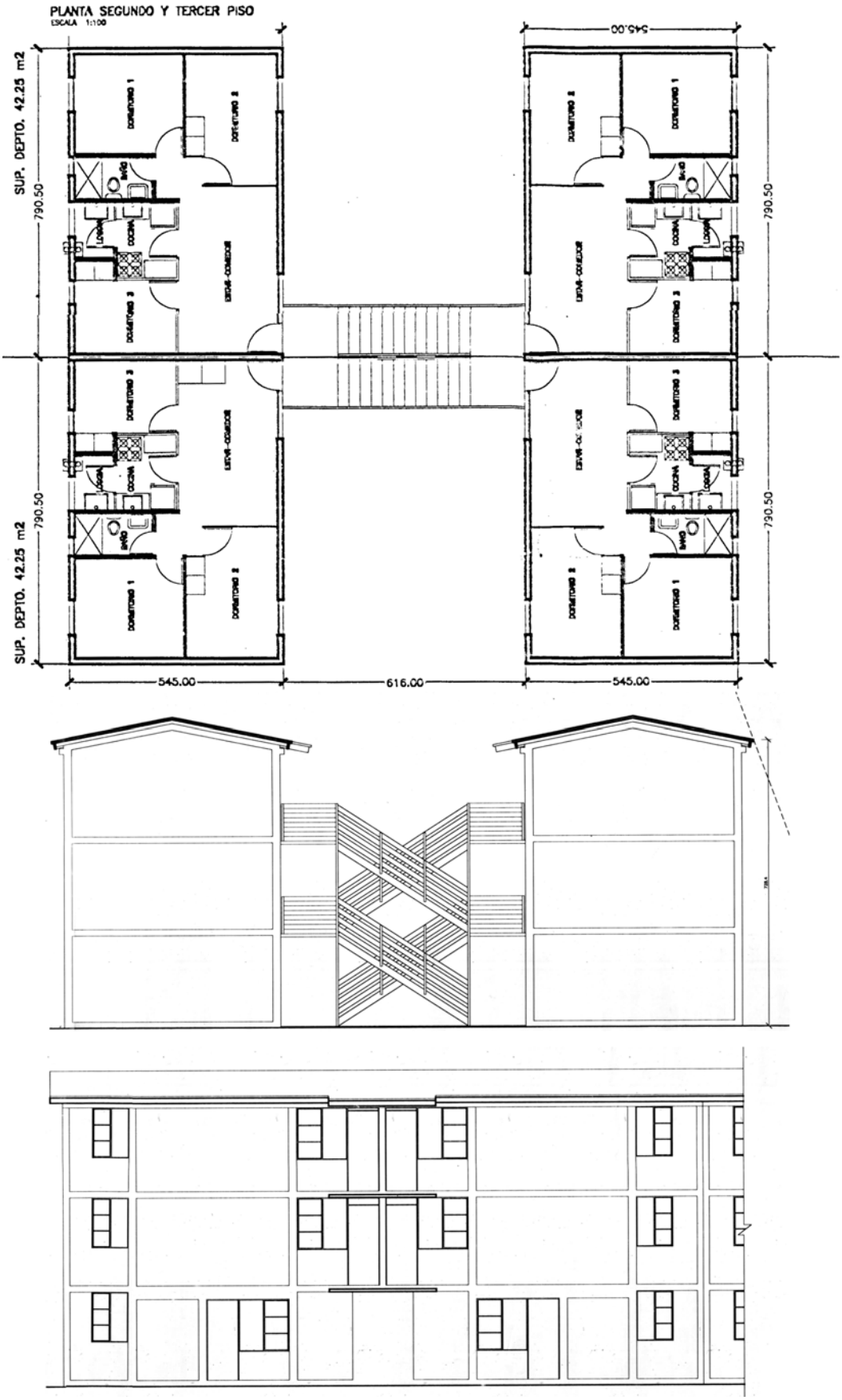
As has been said, the Second Opportunity programme was implemented in two neighbourhoods in BdM, Cerro Morado and Francisco Coloane. According to the building permit, Cerro Morado's construction was approved in November 1994 and finished in May 1995. The whole neighbourhood consisted of seven three-storey blocks with 24 units each, and so the whole area of Cerro Morado had 168 housing units. Each unit is 42.2sqm. On the other hand, Francisco Coloane is located just next to Cerro Morado, and is a much bigger neighbourhood. Both the approval of its construction permit and the completion of construction took place in 1996, in July and December respectively. Certificates were issued for 45 addresses of 12 units each and nine addresses of six units each. However, the organisation of the territory in practice is slightly different, as the 1,188 units that compose Francisco Coloane are distributed in 26 plots with two, three or five 12-units blocks each. Each housing units is 42.4sqm or 42.1sqm (see Figures 6.9 to 6.13).

Figure 6.9 | Cerro Morado: neighbourhood layout



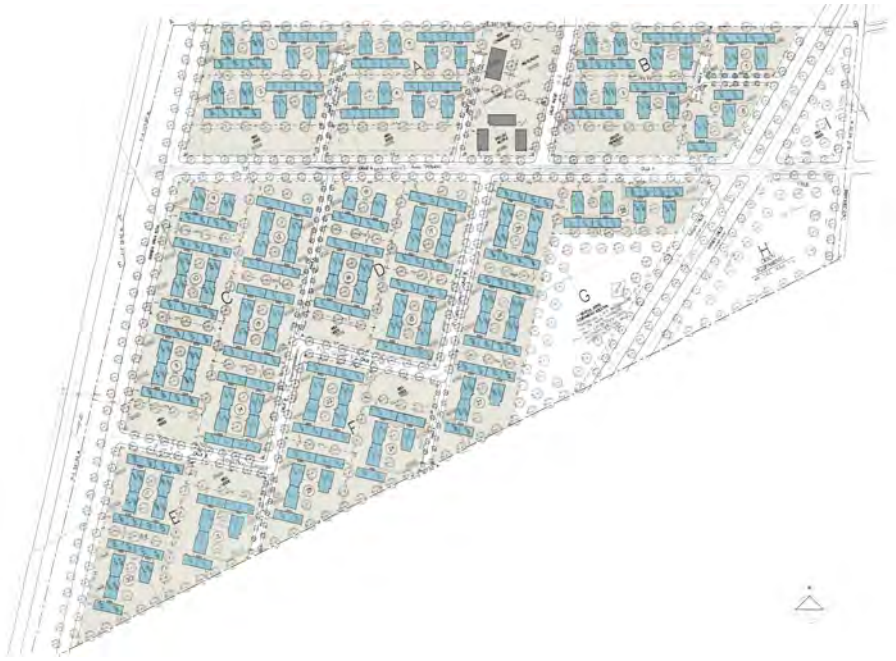
Source: SERVIU. Image modified by author

Figure 6.10 | Cerro Morado: blocks and housing typology (plan and facades)



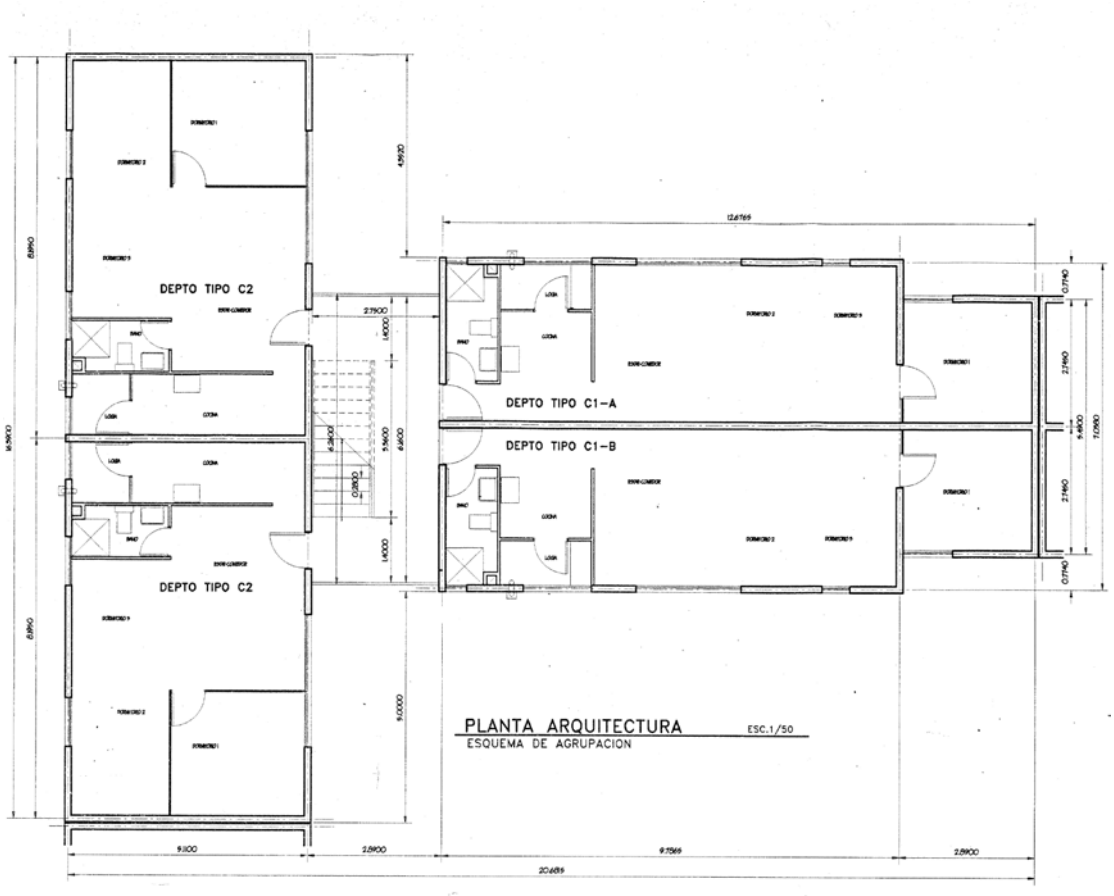
Source: SERVIU. Image modified by author

Figure 6.11 | Francisco Coloane: neighbourhood layout



Source: SERVIU. Image modified by author

Figure 6.12 | Francisco Coloane: blocks and housing typology (plan)



Source: SERVIU, Image modified by author

Figure 6.13 | Francisco Coloane: blocks and housing typology (facades)

Source: SERVIU, Image modified by author

These neighbourhoods, as most CCSS in BdM, have a concentration of most of the vulnerabilities of the territory, with physical and social problems that have accumulated during the last decades. From the physical perspective, the reduced size of the housing units translated over the years into overcrowding, with more than one family group usually living in the same house, and with all the social problems that this brings. Additionally, this condition pushed many households to build unauthorised extensions to their houses, sometimes in very risky conditions considering the seismic nature of the territory, and on occasions triggering conflicts between neighbours (Figure 6.14). Also, the low quality of the construction – with the same standard that could be found in El Volcán – led to water leaks, damp, flooding, problems with electric installations, and a series of physical failures that impacted directly on the residents' quality of life and health. Another relevant issue has been the use of asbestos in the constructions of the roofs during the 1990s, which over time has been declared illegal because of the direct consequences for people's health.

Figure 6.14 | Unauthorised housing extensions in Francisco Coloane

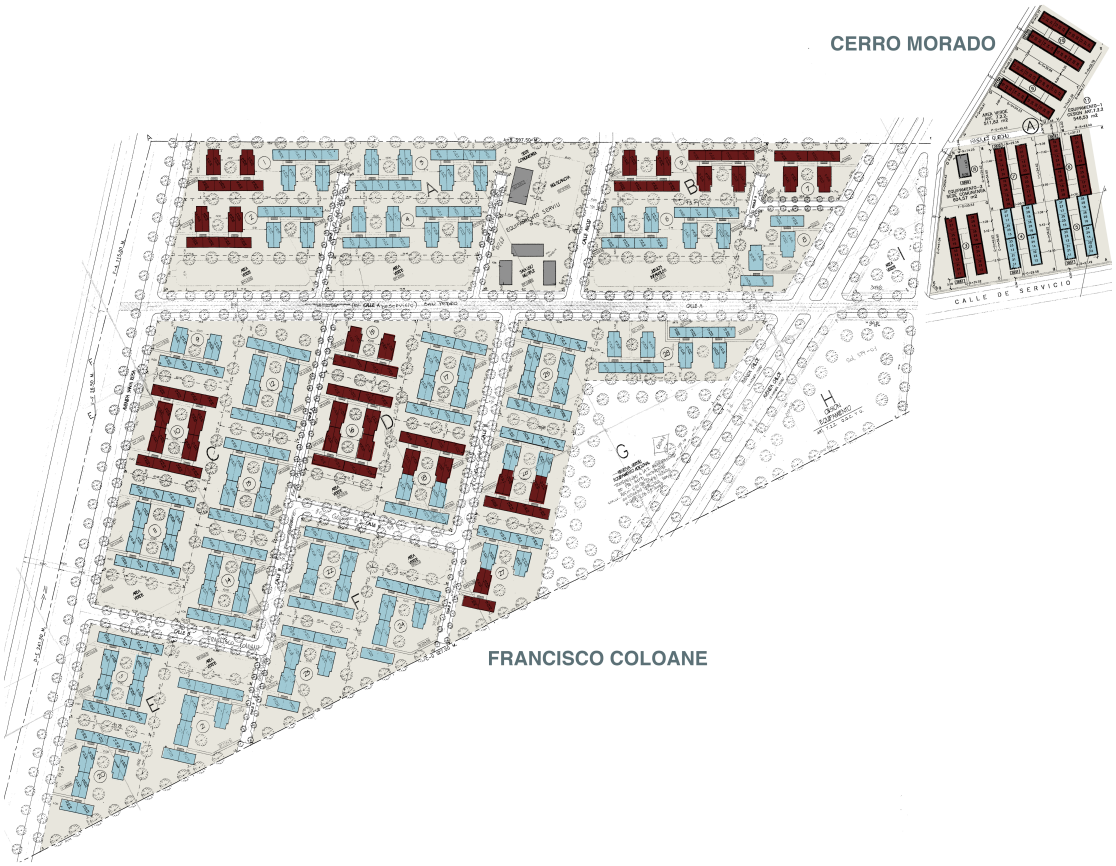
Source: Author

The design of the blocks, with external stairs, has also been identified by many professionals and residents during the interviews as a problematic issue, given the concentration of violence, crime and drug trafficking, which made the stairs an area of vulnerability for many of the residents, leading some of them to install a series of fences. The installation of fences, as one of the professionals of the Second Opportunity pointed out, means that people have to live behind bars in their own homes.

As well as the physical problems, there are a series of social problems that are concentrated in Social Condos as Cerro Morado and Francisco Coloane, as was described and discussed in Chapter 5. However, these socio-physical problems are not evenly distributed, and some neighbourhoods and specific areas within them face more difficulties than others. Actually, the case of Cerro Morado, as a very small neighbourhood in comparison with other Social Condos of BdM, was referred to many times during interviews as an area "much better, calm and with not that many problems" compared with Francisco Coloane. This raises a question about why it was selected as one of the pilot areas for the Second Opportunity programme. One of the explanations given by government officials was the fact that as a pilot, the government wanted to have examples at very different scales.

As explained above, the implementation of the first call of the Second Opportunity programme was based on the voluntary subscription of families inhabiting one block. In the case of BdM, a total of 17 blocks of 24 units each and one block of 12 units applied to be part of the programme of demolitions, 13 of them in Francisco Coloane and 5 in Cerro Morado. These are highlighted in brown in Figure 6.15.

Figure 6.15 | Location of blocks demolished in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado



Source: Author, based on information provided by MINVU

The inclusion of 18 blocks in the programme meant that 420 families were considered 'beneficiaries' of it, 300 in Francisco Coloane and 120 in Cerro Morado. As explained, most families received an expropriation amount (based on an official appraisal of the properties), topped up with a subsidy in order to come to 700 UF[22]. Some families, however, took just the expropriation amount without the subsidy, mainly for two reasons: either they already owned a second property and therefore were not eligible for the subsidy, or they voluntarily decided to give up the subsidy in order to get the expropriation amount as a cheque, looking for a house without going through the SERVIU approval process, which is needed for any house bought with a subsidy. The interviews revealed a variety of cases, for example: people who preferred to take the money and move to a relative's house and refurbish it; people who moved to the countryside, where the expropriation amount was enough to obtain a piece of land and build something new; others who had somewhere else to stay and wanted to use the

[22] In March 2017, 700 UF = £22,960.

money to start a business. According to the data provided by SERVIU, the expropriation amount varied between 403.62 UF and 624.25 UF[23], depending on the appraisal of the properties. Table 6.3 shows the distribution of the different kinds of benefits in each of the neighbourhoods and in the whole area, including a few exceptional cases that for different reasons either did not get benefits or had different modalities of subsidies.

Table 6.3 | Kind of benefit received by each family in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado

	Francisco Coloane		Cerro Morado		Total	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
Expropriation (403 UF-625 UF)	36	12.0%	16	13.3%	52	12.4%
Subsidy and expropriation (700 UF)	254	84.7%	103	85.8%	357	85.0%
Subsidy (700 UF)	5	1.7%	0	0.0%	5	1.2%
Subsidy and expropriation with barter	0	0.0%	1	0.8%	1	0.2%
Without benefit	5	1.7%	0	0.0%	5	1.2%
TOTAL	300	100.0%	120	100.0%	420	100.0%

Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU

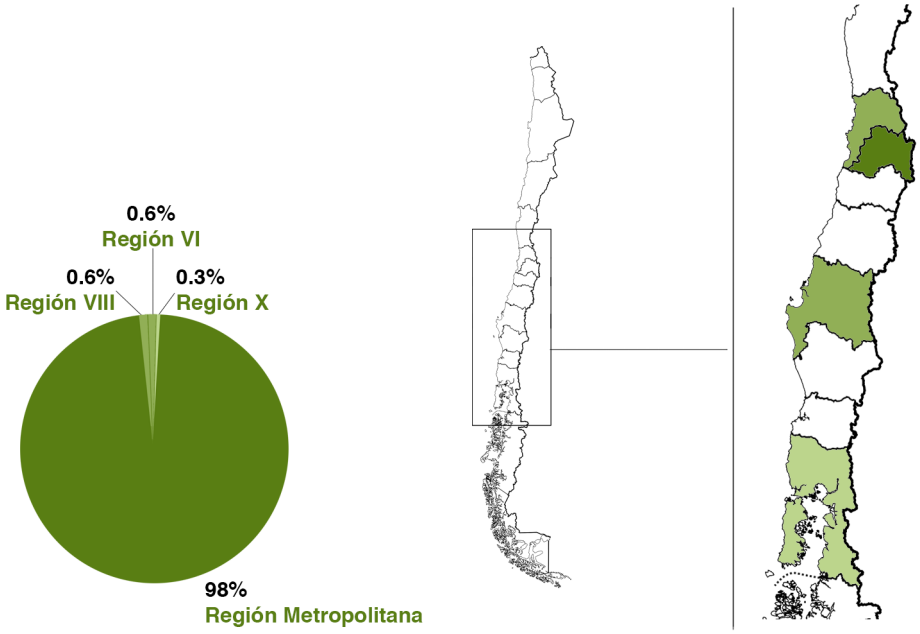
For those beneficiaries who were given subsidies, SERVIU could follow where they got their new houses and the circumstances of the change. According to the official data, out of the 364 beneficiaries whose destinations have been followed, 98% of them stayed in the Metropolitan Region, with a few cases of houses bought through the SERVIU system in the southern regions of O'Higgins, Biobío and Los Lagos. Based on the interviews, however, it was clear that most of the people who decided to move to other regions decided to give up the subsidy and just get the expropriation amount, as the process of getting a house through SERVIU in a different region was rather difficult and protracted.

Of those who stayed in the Metropolitan Region, 96% stayed within the Metropolitan Area of Greater Santiago, and just 4% moved to different localities within the region: Talagante, Chacabuco, Maipo and Melipilla. It is more interesting to look at the numbers within Greater Santiago: 76% of the beneficiaries who stayed in the city, therefore 71% of the total, also stayed in the same *comuna*, Puente Alto; the rest are divided between 16 other *comunas* of the city, with higher concentrations in the adjacent *comunas* of La Pintana (8%) and La Florida (4%). Finally, of the 76% who stayed in the same *comuna* of Puente Alto, 60% stayed in the same territory of BdM, just moving from

[23] In March 2017, 403.62 UF = £13,238 and 624.25 UF = £20,475

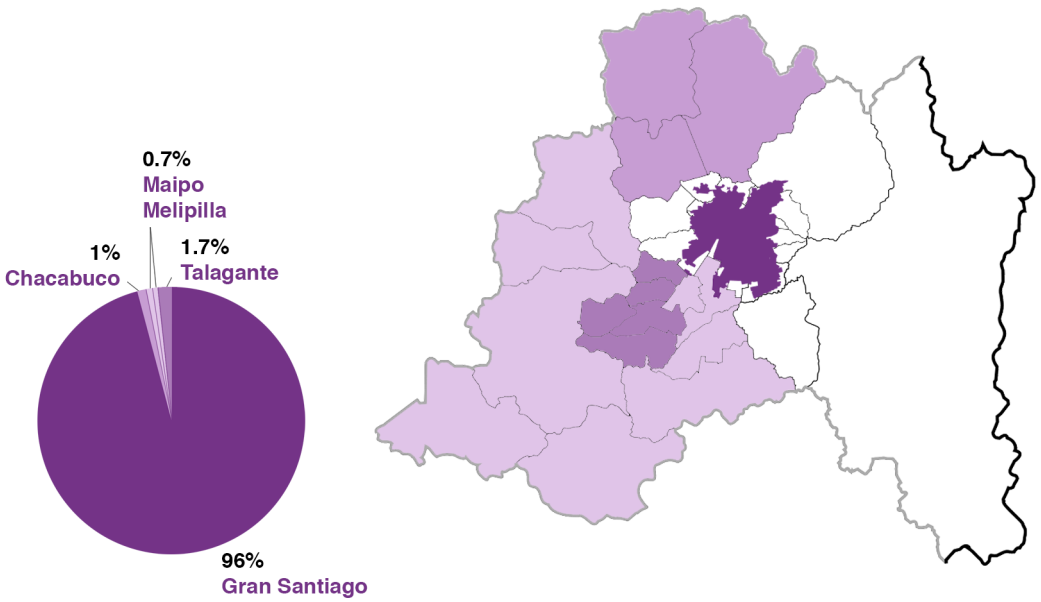
one neighbourhood to another. So around 42% of the beneficiaries who obtained subsidies stayed in BdM. All this redistribution is summarised in Figures 6.16 to 6.19 in terms of percentages and location.

Figure 6.16 | Destination of beneficiaries of subsidies at national level



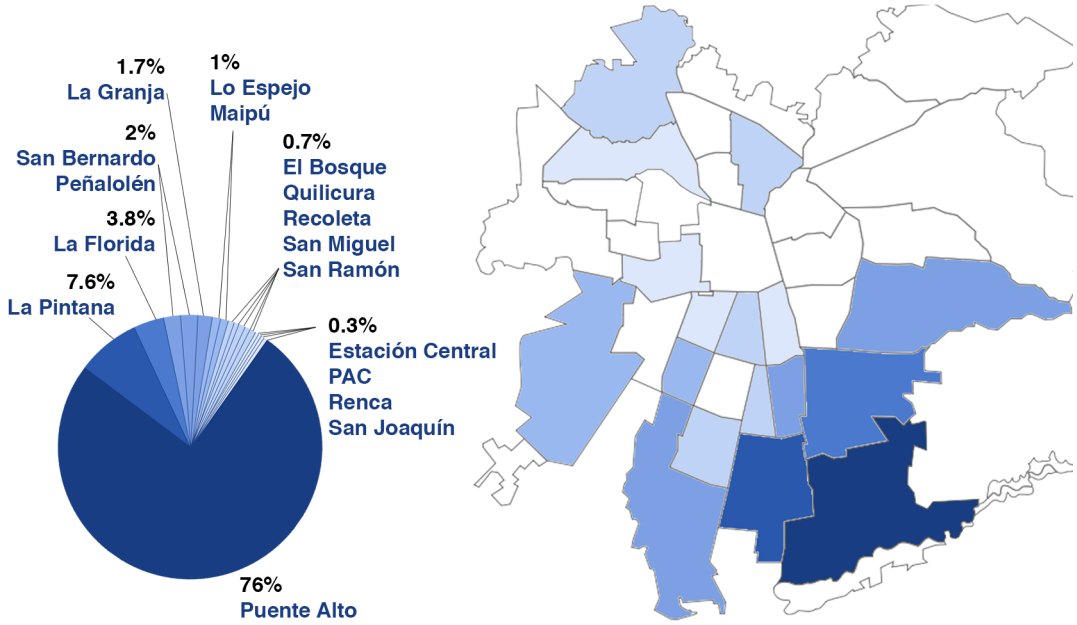
Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU

Figure 6.17 | Destination of beneficiaries of subsidies at regional level



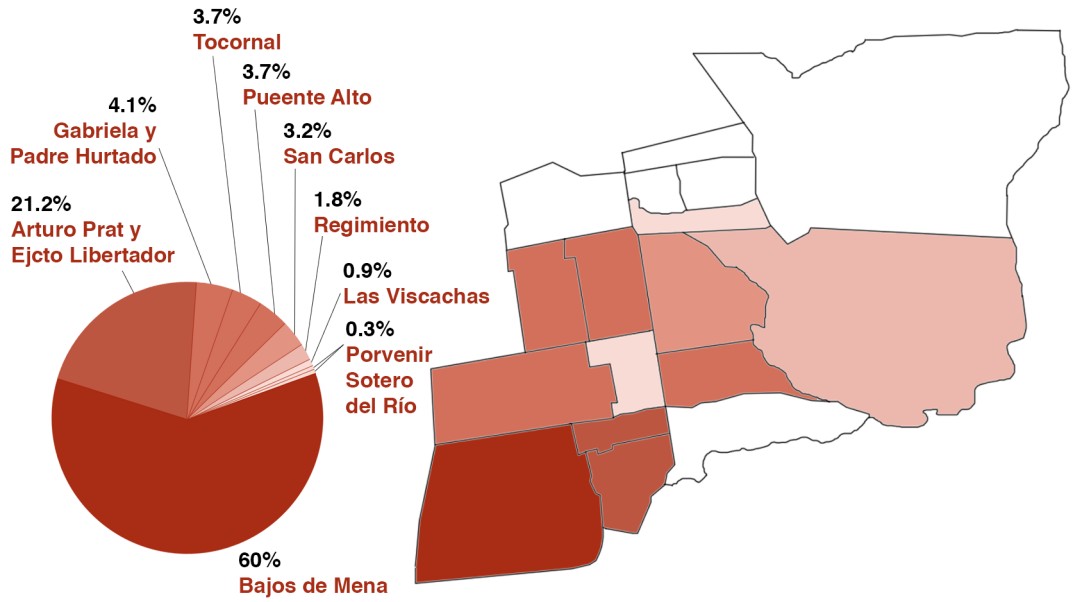
Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU

Figure 6.18 | Destination of beneficiaries of subsidies at city level



Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU

Figure 6.19 | Destination of beneficiaries of subsidies at Puente Alto comuna level



Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU

Finally, in terms of the typologies, 73% of beneficiaries moved to two-storey houses, 24% to single-storey houses, and just 3% to flats located in three- or four-storey buildings.

One of the issues that made this programme very distinctive is the fact that it only considers as 'beneficiaries' those who applied for demolition, and not those who stayed in the area, either because they wanted to stay and preserve their networks or because they did not have trust in the programme. As we will review later in the analysis, this distinction between residents that were or were not beneficiaries had a series of physical, social, and political implications. The physical consequences of the programme in the territory have been very slow and fragmented for a number of reasons affecting particularly those who decided not to apply for demolition and to stay in BdM. Firstly, the process of clearing out the blocks has been very complicated, as many families had different and irregular legal situations and tenancy conditions, and some of them had to stay for longer while waiting for permanent accommodation, even after the blocks had been partially emptied and services such as water and electricity had been cut. This implied that for months and even years, the landscape in the two neighbourhoods has been a mix of blocks that are still functional, blocks that are half empty and partly dismantled where one or two families were still living, and empty lots where there used to be blocks (Figure 6.20). Secondly, given the voluntary nature of the implementation, the blocks have been demolished without an urban plan about the destination of the empty plots, and therefore they are left as empty spaces in the territory, many of them leaving adjacent blocks without the urban structure they used to have. On occasions this transforms the empty plots – in which small pieces of asbestos can be found – into insecure areas in terms of crime.

The implementation of the Second Opportunity programme in BdM has not been free from controversy. This is not just because the consequences for the territory are still very poor, but also because it has triggered a series of social conflicts within the different communities that, as we will see in the next chapter, have contributed even more to fragmenting and damaging the fragile social relationships in the area. Political pressures, earlier tensions, a tight timetable, reduced policy instruments, and a complicated fabric of

actors transformed this programme into one of the most contested housing initiatives of the last decade, particularly regarding its application in BdM.

Figure 6.20 | Landscape in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado after demolitions

Source: Author

Final comments

This chapter has presented a description of the two programmes and neighbourhoods studied in this research. The complexity of the context in which they are immersed implies that this description inevitably touches wider processes and trajectories, beyond the temporal and physical borders of the programmes. It requires an understanding of the relationship of these neighbourhoods and their residents with other areas within and outside BdM, and with wider political and institutional processes that have been discussed here and in the previous chapters of this thesis.

It would be possible to keep describing details of the two programmes, providing different perspectives to give account of their complexity and multiple aspects. This task, however, will be undertaken in the next chapter in order to understand the consequences through using the specific lenses that this research is trying to deploy, to understand their effects in terms of the reduction of inequalities in the economic, social and political sphere.

BdM is a territory that has been on the receiving end of a large number of initiatives, with differing natures and scopes. Even though the two particular programmes depicted here could be seen as instruments that point in different directions – one building new houses and the other one demolishing houses – both of them have been designed and implemented in a shared context of new challenges for housing policies following the official acknowledgement of the need to take care of urban equality, and with a common understanding of the needs of BdM to pursue decent housing. The extent to which the initiatives are actually working in that direction, tackling inequalities in their multiple dimensions, will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

The Impact of two Housing Programmes on the Reduction of Inequalities: Analysis and Discussion

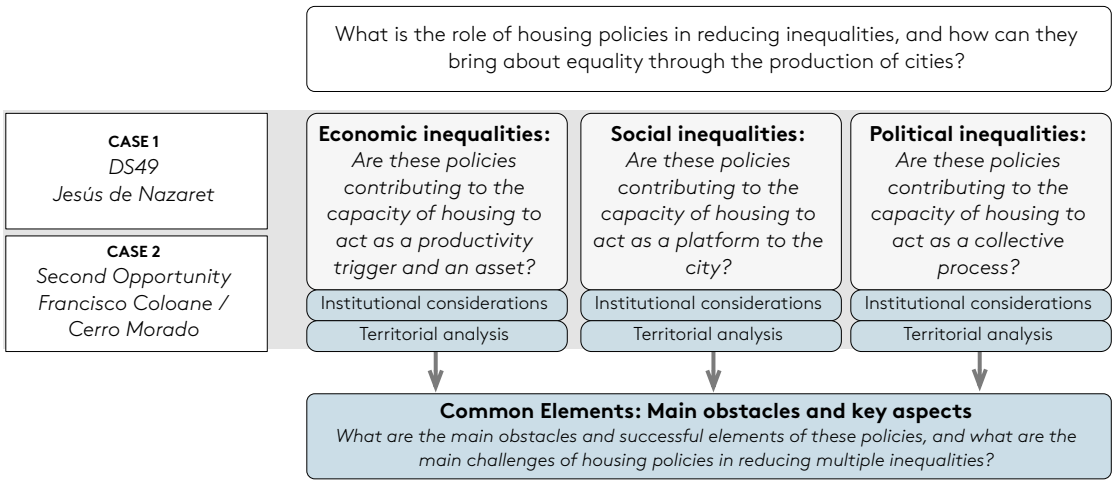
Introduction

What has the role of housing programmes been in reducing inequalities? How have housing policies contributed to decreasing the economic, social and political dimensions of lived inequalities in a territory like BdM? This chapter analyses and discusses the impacts of the DS49 and the Second Opportunity, looking at their implementation in Jesús de Nazaret and Cerro Morado/Francisco Coloane respectively. Using the lenses proposed in the previous chapters, the chapter discusses the extent to which these policies that use the reduction of urban inequalities as part of their narratives have contributed to this task in economic, social and political terms. In so doing, it seeks to identify the main obstacles to and the successful elements of these policies, pointing out the main challenges that housing policies face in becoming instruments for the reduction of inequalities.

The analysis is therefore structured in four parts. Firstly, it looks at economic inequalities (are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a productivity trigger and an asset?). Secondly it looks at social inequalities (are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a platform to the city?). Thirdly, it considers political inequalities (are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a collective process?). Finally, the fourth section focuses on describing the common obstacles and successful elements identified in these dimensions, recognising the 'cracks' that could allow housing policies to become instruments of inequality reduction in a more comprehensive way.

Using various sources, including secondary data, observations and interviews, each of these dimensions is analysed from an institutional and territorial perspective, identifying the crucial elements for each of them. Rather than an assessment or absolute evaluation of their effects, this chapter explores the complex relationships that have shaped the capacity of these programmes to act in the three dimensions proposed, returning to Flyvbjerg's (2001) methodological suggestions and focusing on values and power, getting close to reality, studying particular cases and contexts, and looking at practices that might explain the paths and effects of these programmes in the territory. The structure of the analysis of this chapter is summarised in Figure 7.1.

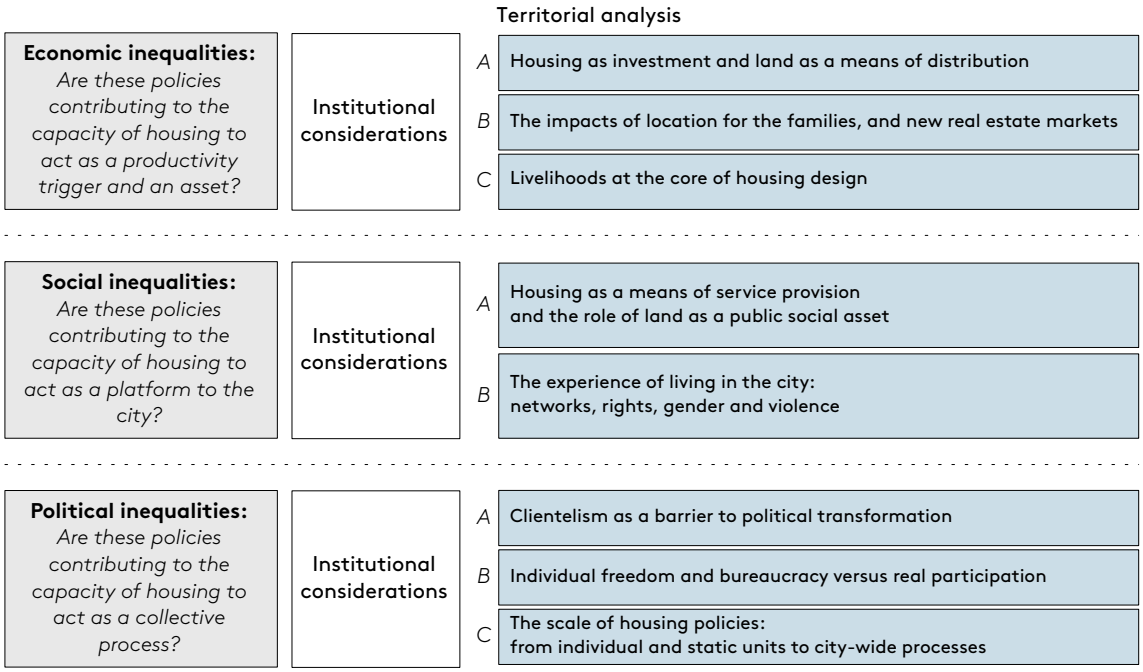
Figure 7.1 | Structure of the analysis



Source: Author

Each aspect is presented by first introducing the *institutional considerations* identified. Then each section presents a *territorial analysis* for the BdM area. Based on the analysis of the data collected, a series of perspectives is defined for each of the three aspects, and these perspectives are featured as key elements that have reinforced or hindered the task of reducing urban inequalities, as summarised in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2 | Structure and elements of analysis



Source: Author

7.1 Economic inequalities: Are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a productivity trigger and asset?

To address this question, this section analyses the economic impacts of the programmes from an institutional perspective, and then reflects on the consequences of the programmes in the territory. Regarding the latter, the territorial analysis is divided into three aspects: firstly, discussing their effects in terms of public investment and its economic repercussions for households, particularly looking at land as a means for redistribution of wealth; secondly, exploring the impacts of housing location for families, and the transformation of local real estate markets; and thirdly, discussing how and if housing production under these programmes has put the strengthening of livelihoods and sustainability at the core of housing design. The main points discussed are summarised in Figure 7.3.

As an introduction to the main findings, there are four general considerations that appeared repeatedly as key aspects, and that will be reviewed more closely throughout this section:

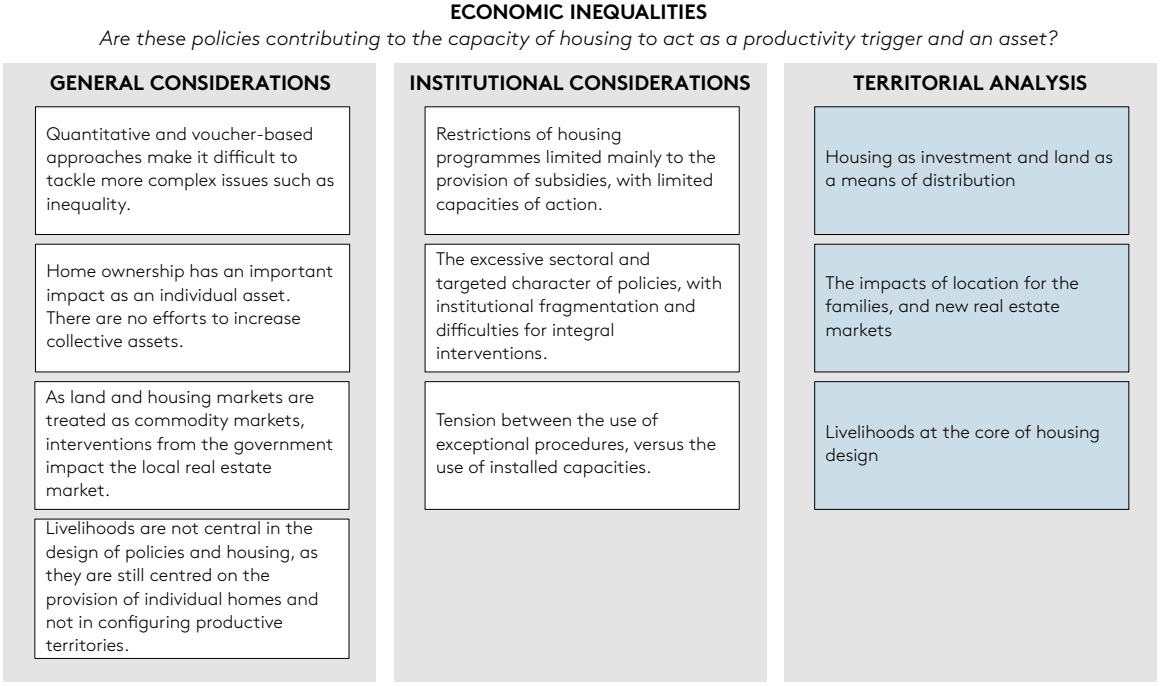
- The exclusively voucher-based approach makes it difficult to tackle complex issues such as inequality, and as targeted policies are usually assessed in relation to their capacity to focus on poverty, issues of inequality are hardly considered in the policy design.

- Home ownership has an important impact as an individual economic asset for families, and it acts as a key base for further economic development and stability. However, as ownership and subsidies provision are based on an individualistic logic, there have been no efforts to pursue an increase in collective assets.

- As land and housing markets are mainly treated as commodity markets, interventions from the government impact on the local real estate market, with a series of consequences for residents that might affect their capacity to afford land.

- Treated as sectoral policies focused on the provision of individual houses, livelihoods are not considered as a central aspect. Housing design at different scales, from the unit to the urban structure, does not focus on ensuring sustainable livelihoods at the individual level, or on the configuration of productive territories.

Figure 7.3 | Economic inequalities: Main aspects of analysis



Source: Author

7.1.1 Economic inequalities: Institutional considerations

In institutional terms, three aspects appear to be key to understanding the scope and limitations of policies in promoting housing as a productivity trigger and an asset. Firstly, housing policies are restricted mainly to the provision of subsidies. This definition limits their scope and capacities, as even though some policies have become more ambitious, the instruments that they use are mainly subsidies, limiting their capacity to deal with, for example, questions about productivity and livelihoods. As the head of the Housing Policy Division (DPH – *División de Política Habitacional*) of the MINVU explains in an interview, the DPH is mainly an office for the provision and administration of subsidies. In his words, "the DPH has always been in charge of the subsidies, that is its focus. For us, the central issue is to deliver subsidies" (Gramsch, 2014).

A second aspect to understanding the limitations of housing policies in the current institutional order, is the fact that policies in Chile tend to be conceived and valued in terms of their capacity to remain sectoral and targeted. This means that it is very difficult to generate instances of inter-sectoral policies, tackling aspects as complex and multiple as the reduction of territorial inequalities. Also, the logic of targeting prevents them from generating integrated urban social policies with universal principles.

The sectoral approach generates fragmentation between different public bodies. As the head of the DPH explains, even within the Ministry the division in charge of housing policy (DPH) and the division in charge of urban development (DDU) have very few instances of dialogue: "For us, the central issue is the subsidies (…) and the DDU have always been in charge of planning and regulation" (Gramsch, 2014). These definitions at macro-institutional level have concrete repercussion for those working on the programmes and the territories. As one of the government official working at the SERVIU as part of the Second Opportunity programme states, "there is no coordination. Because in the same territory (BdM) we are working in different sectors, and even if it is true that there are now some attempts at coordination, we are alone in the territory, and until a few months ago no one entered the area, not even the police…"

Another government official adds that the rigidity of the instruments that the Ministry can use (namely, subsidies), and the inflexibility of some procedures mean that any programme that seeks to propose different ways of working, incorporating new and more innovative aspects, is immediately seen as something that irritates the rest of the organisation, and the possibilities of implementing policies with an integral character, linked to different ministries or even areas within the same ministry, therefore become harder.

The third aspect identified is the constant tension between the exceptionality of procedures (sometimes criticised as improvisation in the interviews) and the consolidation and use of installed capacities. This is particularly dramatic in the case of the Second Opportunity. A civil servant who previously worked on a similar case of demolition in the district of Cerro Navia, called Las Viñitas, and who now works on the ground in BdM, highlights the lack of learning from one case to the other: "There was nothing learnt from Las Viñitas; in the Second Opportunity they did not take into consideration the experience that existed, everything was from the ground". On a different note, one of the SERVIU civil servants at the regional level, recognises that it is only because of the installed capacities in the team that this kind of new programmes can work, given that the professionals who have worked for years in the public sector know how to work with several exceptions to the law, and this speaks about the lack of institutionalisation and systematisation of previous processes, and the excessive reliance on individuals. "We have not been able to show that there are different options, complementary to the existing ones", she added.

The excessive and almost exclusive focus on the provision of subsidies, the difficulties of inter-sectoral work and fragmentation, and the lack of systematisation of learning processes within institutions are the three main aspects identified at institutional level that set the scope and limitations of policies that try to contribute to the capacity of housing to act as a productivity trigger and asset. Hereinafter we will review in more detail to the consequences of these aspects for the territory in the two cases researched.

7.1.2 Economic inequalities: Territorial analysis

a. Housing as investment and land as a means of distribution

When calculating the indices of 'after taxes' inequality, housing investment is not considered in Chile as a redistribution measure, as a means through which the state decreases inequality. However, considering the high rates of home ownership in the country, and the importance of wealth inequality, discussed in previous chapters, this section presents the implications of these two programmes focusing on the economic impacts of state investment, and the use of land and housing as a means of distribution. The provision of housing implies the direct transfer of an asset equivalent to 700 UF[24] to families that belong mainly to the first quintile[25], and therefore earn a per capita income of less than CL $58,933, equivalent to around £70, as shown in Table 7.1. This means that a standard housing subsidy of 700 UF is equivalent to at least 25.5 times the yearly per capita income of its beneficiary household, and one of the most important direct transfers of resources (through a voucher) made by the central government to families. What this sub-section seeks to address is the extent to which this investment in families is acting as a means of redistribution, translating into better economic conditions for beneficiaries, and increasing their asset base over time. In other words, it seeks to understand if the housing and land investment made by the government translates into a surplus for households, increasing the productivity of families and territories.

Table 7.1 | Values of per capita monthly autonomous income of households, per quintile

Quintile	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Median
I	-	$ 58,933	$ 31,545	$ 36,574
II	$ 58,934	$ 100,675	$ 79,693	$ 80,000
III	$ 100,678	$ 159,763	$ 127,460	$ 125,694
IV	$ 159,765	$ 286,092	$212,936	$ 207,464
V	$ 286,113	$ 14,852,474	$ 757,662	$ 485,473

Source: Kremerman and Durán (2012), based on micro-data of CASEN 2009

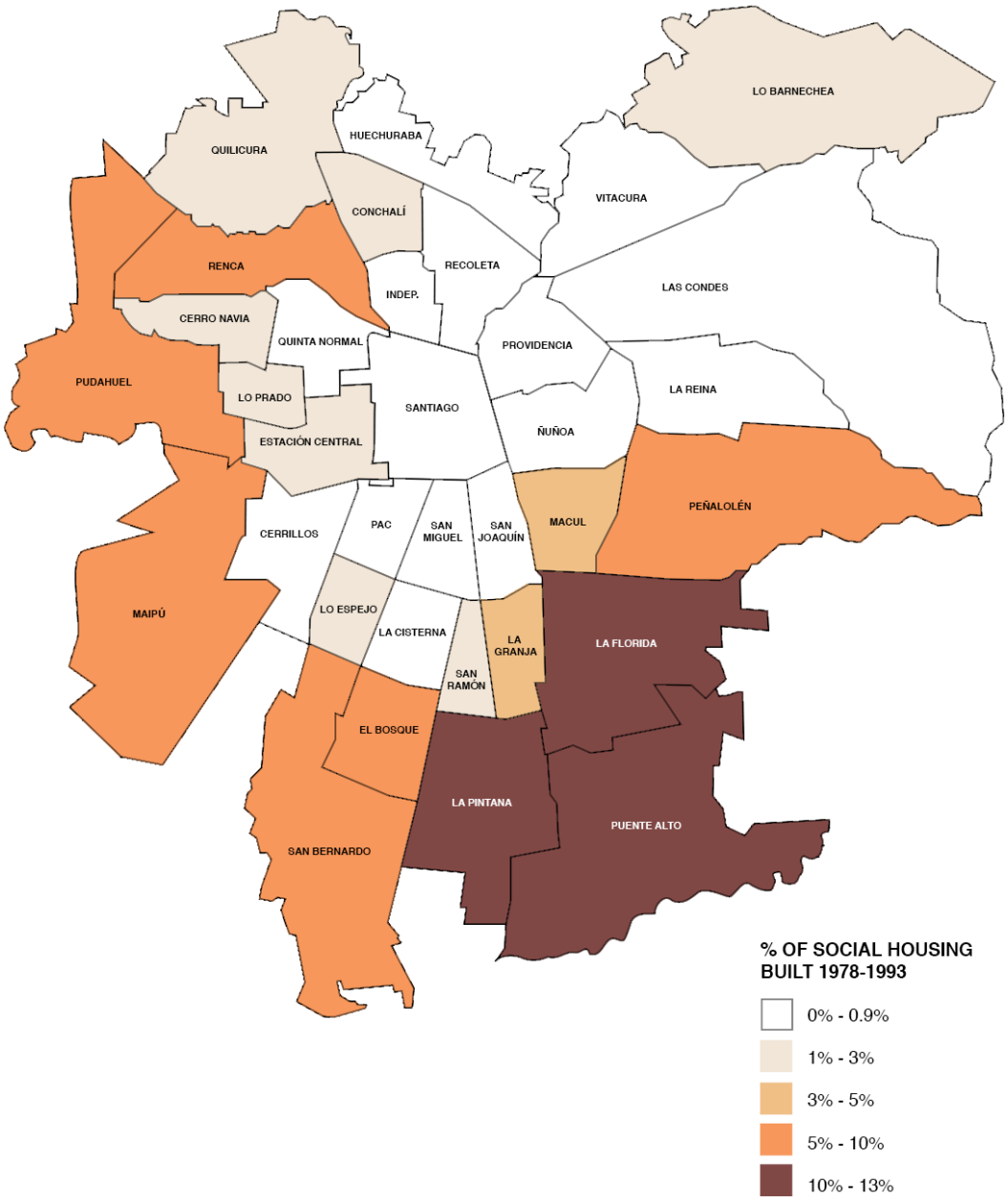
To do so, it first discusses the socioeconomic profile of the district of Puente Alto and the BdM area, and then presents the findings of this research regarding the impact on

[24] In March 2017, 700 UF = £22,960.
[25] The first Quintile group families whose score in the Social Protection Record [FPS – *Ficha de Protección Social*] is under 8,500 points, that is the maximum score required for applying to the basic social housing programmes. The detail of the relation between FPS score and quintiles is: *Quintile I* (between 2,072 and 8,500 points in FPS); *Quintile II* (between 8,501 and 11,734); *Quintile III* (between 11,735 and 13,484); *Quintile IV* (between 13,485 and 14,557); and *Quintile V* (14,558 or more).

households of the investment made by the programmes, the costs of the policies' processes and outcomes for families, and the changes in terms of affordability of the area.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the district of Puente Alto is in the southern periphery of Santiago, and has for decades had the highest concentrations of social housing construction in the Metropolitan Region. This is shown in historical terms in Figure 7.4, which shows the distribution of social housing construction in the city of Santiago between 1978 and 1993.

Figure 7.4 | Basic housing built between 1978 and 1993



Source: Tokman, 2006:501. Original image based on CASEN 2000. Modified by author

Looking at more recent figures, it is clear that Puente Alto continues to have high levels of social housing construction. Between 2007 and 2014, and just considering subsidies for housing for vulnerable urban groups, the number of subsidies in Puente Alto was higher than the average per district at national and regional level, as shown in Table 7.2. It even reached ten times the national average for subsidies per district in 2012 and more than four times the Santiago Metropolitan Region average for subsidies per district in 2012 and 2013.

Table 7.2 | Housing subsidies for Vulnerable Urban groups, 2007-2014. Total amount at national, regional and district level; average number of subsidies per district at national and regional level compared to Puente Alto

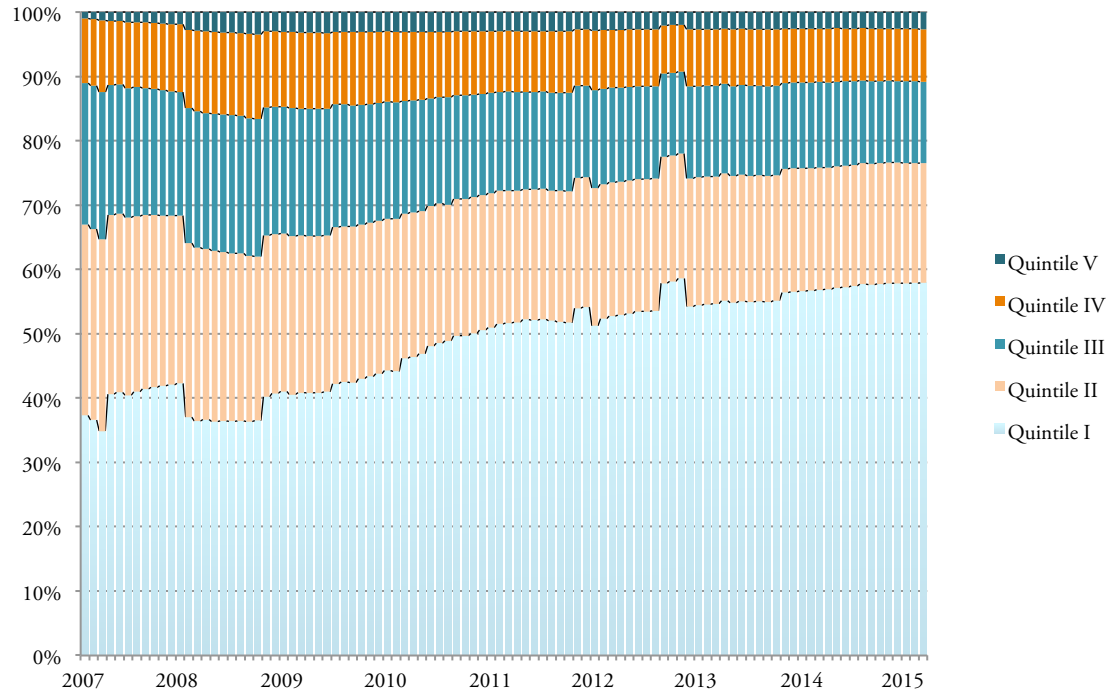
Year	National		Metropolitan Region		Puente Alto
	Total Subsidies**	Average per district	Total Subsidies**	Average per district	Total Subsidies*
2007	54,439	**157.8**	17,752	**341.4**	**598**
2008	54,010	**156.6**	15,811	**304.1**	**345**
2009	65,442	**189.7**	21,581	**415.0**	**848**
2010	80,389	**233.0**	14,898	**286.5**	**441**
2011	38,976	**113.0**	11,816	**227.2**	**232**
2012	50,722	**147.0**	12,412	**238.7**	**1,067**
2013	38,771	**112.4**	13,387	**257.4**	**1,137**
2014	24,438	**70.8**	5,925	**113.9**	**321**

***** *Based on information provided by the DPH-MINVU and Observatorio Habitacional MINVU. Includes housing subsidies for Vulnerable Urban groups, including reconstruction*
****** *Based on data provided by the MINVU. Includes housing subsidies for Vulnerable Urban groups, including reconstruction*

Source: Author, based on data provided by MINVU and Observatorio Habitacional MINVU

The evolution of the socioeconomic demographic composition in the district of Puente Alto during the same period shows that the number of residents in the first quintile has increased significantly, reaching almost 60% (Figure 7.5). This increase in the proportion of poorer people in the district can in part be explained by the arrival of new residents through social housing projects, consolidating Puente Alto over time as the most populated district of the country.

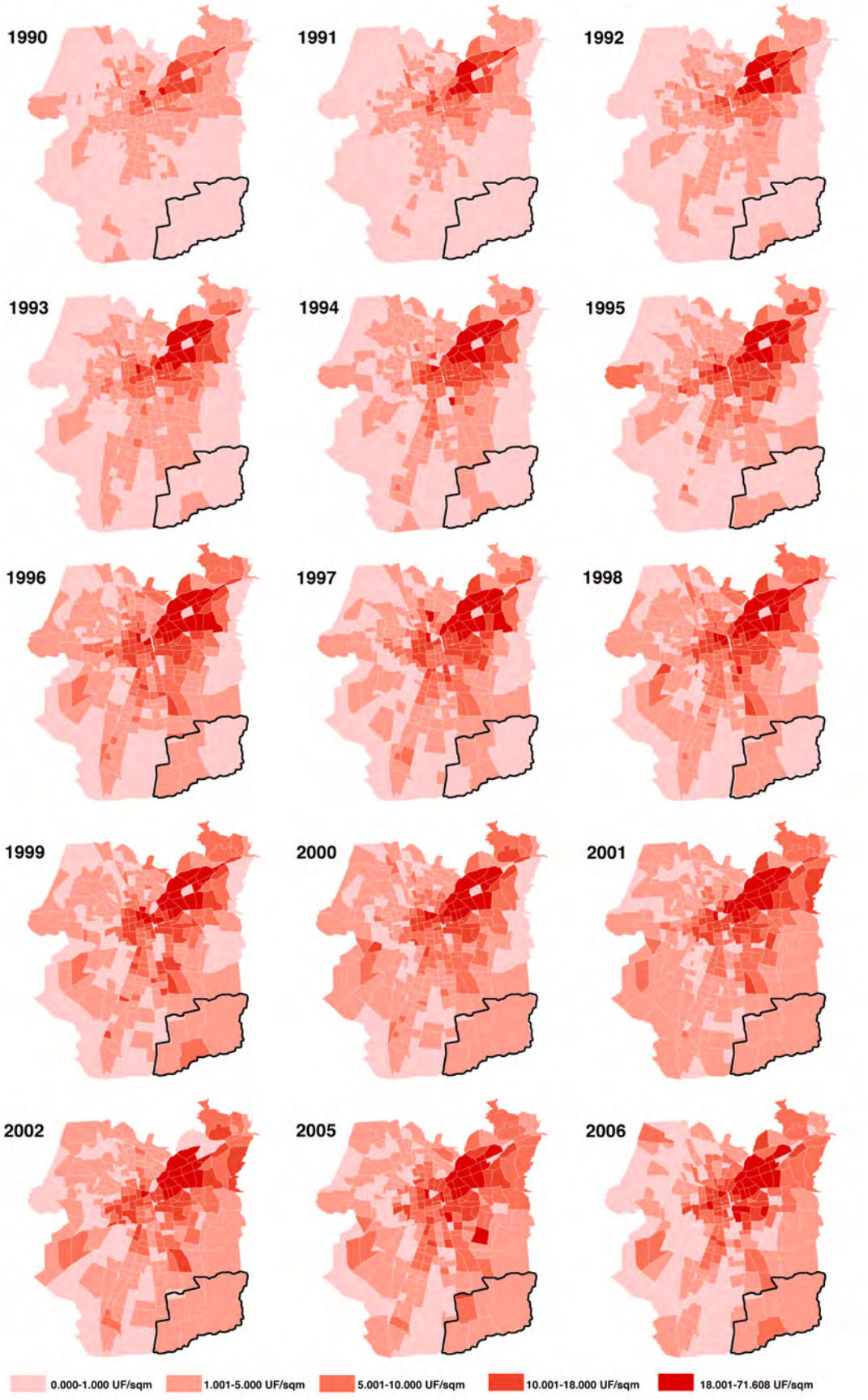
Figure 7.5 | Distribution of population of Puente Alto 2007-2015, by quintile



Source: Author, based on data from FPS score, Ministerio de Desarrollo Social

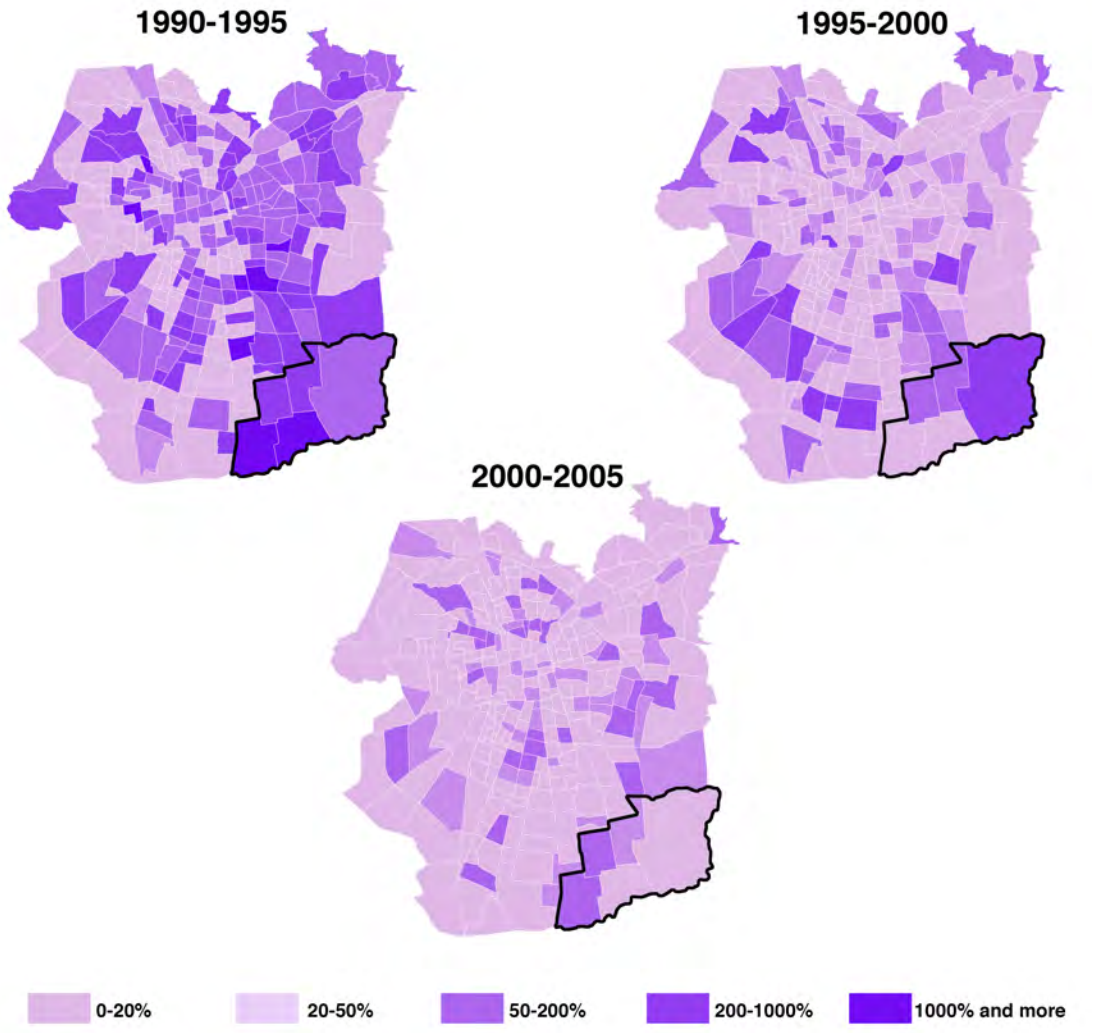
If we observe the evolution and changes of land values in Santiago (Figures 7.6 and 7.7), and specifically in the area of the Puente Alto district, we can recognise a period during the early and mid-nineties in which, along with the process of urbanisation and incorporation into the city of Santiago, land values increased in the area. Particularly in BdM, this took place during 1995, just after the first urbanisation processes in the area started, following the incorporation of the area to the Metropolitan Regulatory Plan of Santiago (PRMS) in 1994. However, it is clear that the area has remained as one of the lowest land-value territories within the city.

Figure 7.6 | Land value of Santiago per year, 1990-2006 - Puente Alto area highlighted



Source: Author, based on data of Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

Figure 7.7 | Increases in Land value in Santiago 1990-1995, 1995-2000, 2000-2005. Puente Alto area highlighted



Source: Author, based on data of Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

With this socioeconomic territorial background in mind, we want to discuss here if the housing investment made by the state is acting as a means of redistribution, translating into better economic conditions and increasing the asset base of families. In absolute terms, there is in both cases an increase in the household capital base: for those moving to Jesús de Nazaret, either they did not have a property before (*allegados*) or they owned a highly devalued property, as was the case for those moving out of El Volcán. In the case of the Second Opportunity programme, 12.4% of the beneficiaries only received the expropriation amount, with values between 403.62 UF and 624.25 UF[26], while 85% of the families also received a top up subsidy to get 700 UF[27]. Considering that the original

[26] In March 2017, 403.62 UF = £13,160, and 624.25 UF = £20,350.
[27] In March 2017, 700 UF = £22,960.

housing typology of Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado had a value of around 227 UF[28] when they were built in the 1990s (Sandoval, 2005), and given that the UF is a Unit of Account adjusted for inflation, there is a clear increase in the capital held by families in their homes. And for those who gave up the subsidy and received the expropriation amount directly, this translated into an actual increase of capital.

Now the question is whether this increase of capital for the families can be defined as an investment used by the state for redistributive ends, and how effective this investment has been. For both programmes, the investment made by the state cannot be seen in isolation from previous interventions linked to the housing processes of the families, and the history of housing investments made by the state in those families. In the case of the DS49 in Jesús de Nazaret, more than 40% came from El Volcán and had gone through a series of publicly-fund housing interventions before, and in the case of the Second Opportunity, the construction of the neighbourhoods that were demolished is part of the history of housing investment made for those families.

In the case of families that moved from El Volcán to Jesús de Nazaret, there has been a long history of decisions and investment since its construction in 1996. After the heavy leaks took place during the winter of 1997, the government made many decisions about how to move forward. As described in Chapter 5, there was a subsidy in 1997 for repairing the 2,306 affected flats for a total of 27,672 UF (12 UF per unit[29]), paid by the Metropolitan SERVIU (Sandoval, 2005). During the winter of 2000, the repaired houses were affected again by the rain, so in 2001 and after a lot of pressures from the residents of El Volcán, the government offered three different alternatives: (1) to change the house for another one, increasing the available subsidy from 227 UF to 330 UF[30]; (2) to sell the property back to the SERVIU, and with that money look for something new in the private market, offering an extra subsidy of 80 UF[31]; or (3) to give the property to the SERVIU to be repaired, moving to a temporal *hotel* (semi-dismantled apartments in the area, some of them in very poor conditions), and then returning to the house once it was

[28] In March 2017, 227 UF = £7,400.
[29] In March 2017, the total investment of 27,672 UF = £908,167; the investment per unit of 12 UF = £393.
[30] In March 2017, 227 UF = £7,400, and 330 UF = £10,760.
[31] In March 2017, 80 UF = £2,608.

ready. As Sandoval (2005) points out, even though around 60% of the population decided on one of the first two options and left El Volcán during the early 2000s, those who decided to leave were generally those who had better economic conditions to pay for the costs of moving and in some cases access to private credit, in contrast to the more vulnerable 875 families who stayed in El Volcán during that process.

Looking at the detail of the interventions made by the government in the houses of the families who stayed, even if the market value of each house increased to around 350 UF, the state spent around 400 UF[32] per unit, more than the original value of the houses just a few years before. Some of the empty flats were illegally occupied, regularised over time with the help of the Municipality and the SERVIU but requiring savings from occupants. While others were used by the SERVIU to provide solutions to people from informal settlements, for example the 360 families who had occupied the old landfill La Cañamera, just next to El Volcán (Sandoval, 2005). By 2008, there was a clear political view about the necessity for a much more drastic intervention in El Volcán, and the demolition started, encouraging families to set up housing committees in order to get different solutions. It is in this context that committees such as the *Padre Alberto Hurtado,* whose members moved to Jesús de Nazaret, were created.

So in terms of public investment, the families arriving at Jesús de Nazaret from El Volcán had over the years received much more financial support than a standard family, but one could not really say that this investment had translated into much better economic conditions for them. As one of the government officials of SERVIU pointed out, "there are 17 years of different decisions; many vouchers, some people moving to other houses in the same area or somewhere else, etc. (…) El Volcán has been depopulated and repopulated four or five times". This reality is also recognised by higher level authorities within the Ministry of Housing: "We did not demolish the blocks, so we fixed those that had failed during the first heavy rains in 1997, because the construction standard was very poor; but they failed again on account of the rain in 2000, and we had to intervene and improve them again between 2001 and 2003, the same blocks".

[32] In March 2017, 350 UF = £11,410, and 400 UF = £13,040.

The costs of the interventions in El Volcán, including the demolition costs, have far exceeded the use and exchange value of the blocks. According to a government official from SERVIU, it is estimated that in some of the blocks, the state has invested more than 1,800 UF[33] per unit, an incredibly high amount that could have been used for a series of other possible solutions. Another authority said that they estimated the investment to be CL$ 19M (around 750 UF[34]). There is not even a clear figure for how much has been invested. In addition to the costs associated with El Volcán, according to the same professional, the construction of houses in Jesús de Nazaret was "much more expensive than normal subsidised houses, just because 40% of the people came from El Volcán", so it was a way to ensure higher standards and avoid future political problems with the families.

In the case of the Second Opportunity, even through, as has been said, the capital value of the houses has increased for the families, the investment from the state is clearly higher than in a standard housing programme, not just because families are getting a second subsidy or expropriation amount of 700 UF[35], plus the 46 UF[36] for mobility, but also because the state covers the costs of asbestos removal, demolition, and plot clearing. In that sense, for both El Volcán and those neighbourhoods involved in the Second Opportunity programme there have been many criticisms in relation to the radical decision to demolish the blocks, rather than to intervene and improve them. "We are demolishing properties, when what we need is to have more houses! It is such a strange decision! But then, it seems like reconverting the blocks is too expensive, it would need a plan in which families do not dismantle the properties when they leave, as they do now", a professional in the field explains.

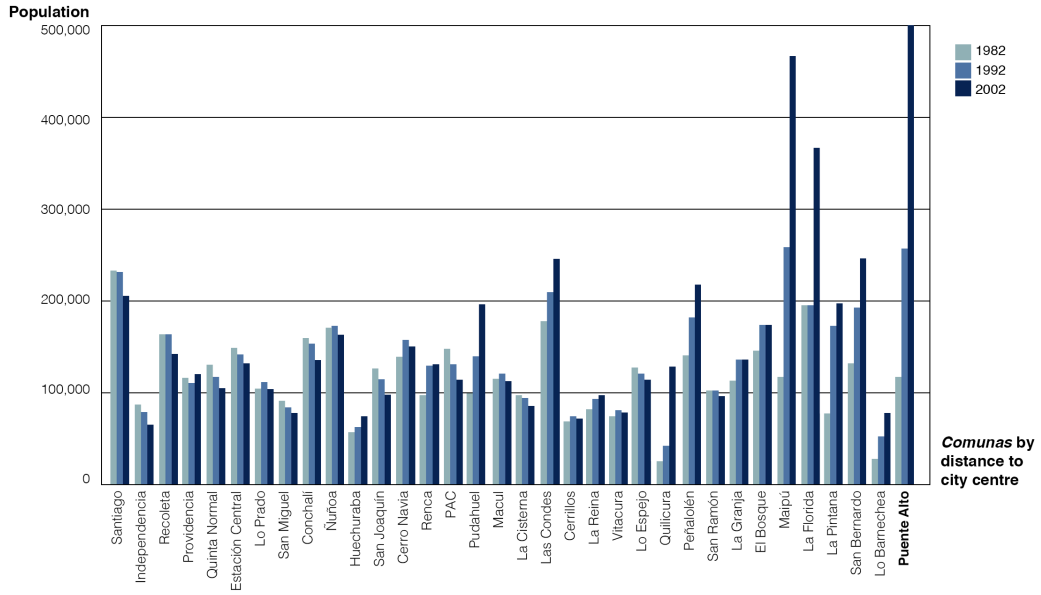
b. The impacts of location for families and new real estate markets

One of the main costs of housing production is associated with land acquisition, which explains why so many social housing projects are located in cheap peripheral land. We need to ask to what extent the costs of inhabiting the periphery are absorbed by the

[33] In March 2017, 1,800 UF = £58,680.
[34] In March 2017, 750 UF = £24,450.
[35] In March 2017, 700 UF = £22,960.
[36] In March 2017, 46 UF = £1,500.

residents. We also need to ask if the costs saved by private developers building on cheap land, and using economies of scale to reduce costs, are in the end paid directly or indirectly by the families who inhabit the area. As has been said, Puente Alto has had massive concentration of construction of social housing for years, and at the same time it is the district furthest from the city centre, as shown by Tokman (2006) in Figure 7.8.

Figure 7.8 | Population and distance from city centre in 1982, 1992, 2002



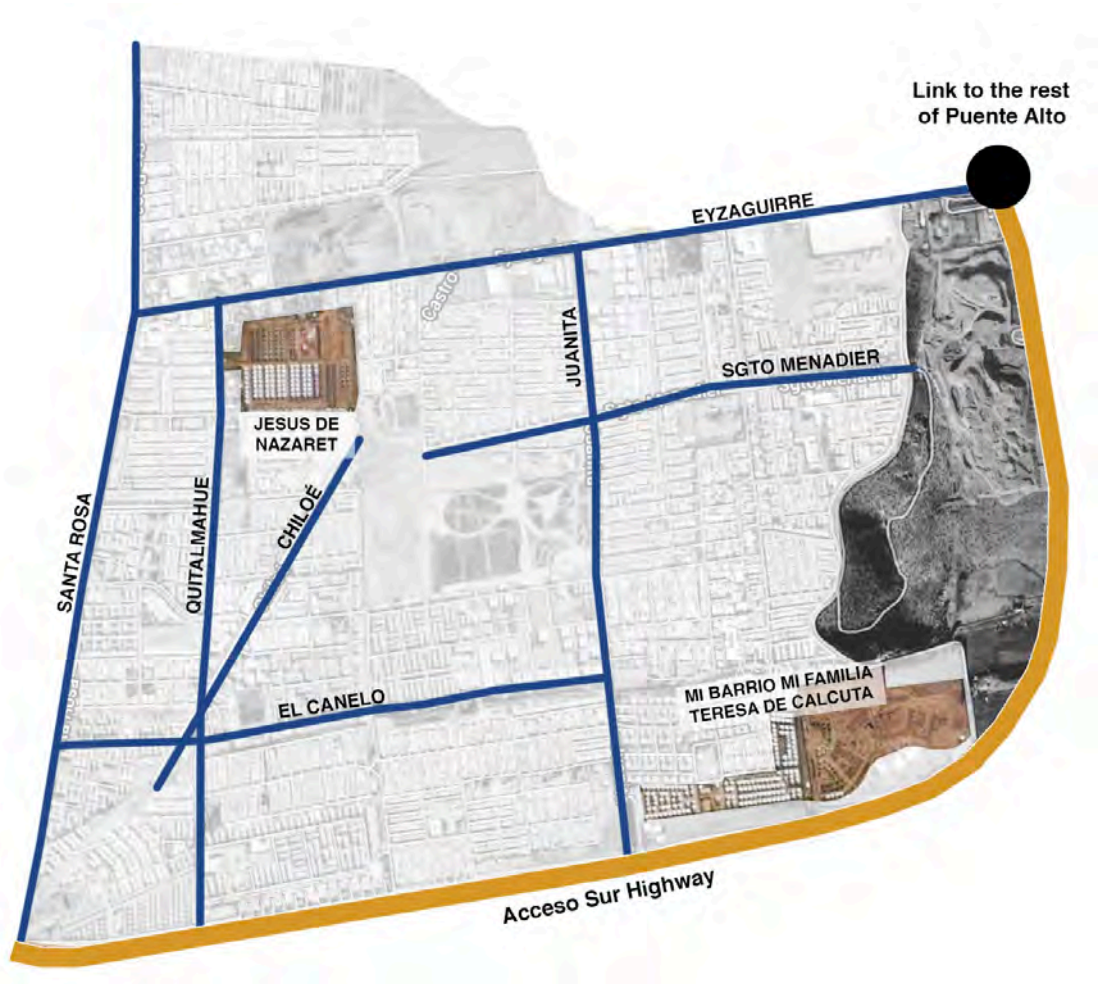
Source: Tokman, 2006:499. Image modified by author

Over the years, private developers working under the schemes and rules promoted by the state made the decision to build social housing on the outskirts of the city. Thirty years later, people have developed a series of dependency networks and systems, becoming dependent on certain locations and territory. It is important to understand this, as even if the state could now prioritise the investment in better-located land, for most families in BdM staying in the area seems like the only possible option.

In the case of Jesús de Nazaret, the main priority for most families was to leave their condition as *allegados* or living in El Volcán. As one of the *dirigentas* from Jesús de Nazaret said, "it never occurred to me to leave BdM; for me the issue was to leave El Volcán, and move to a house – not a flat. Because you see that the children want to go out here, they want to play outside, they need a garden".

The change of location within the BdM area, however, can have an impact on the households' economy. In the case of the families that moved from El Volcán to Jesús de Nazaret this is clear in many respects: not only did they move to a neighbourhood without the symbolic stigma associated with El Volcán, but they also moved to a much better location within BdM, closer to two big avenues and directly linked to the main route to the rest of Puente Alto. Compared with *Mi Barrio Mi Familia* or *Teresa de Calcuta,* other neighbourhoods that were built in similar conditions for families from El Volcán, Jesús de Nazaret is located in a more expensive and better connected location (Figure 7.9).

Figure 7.9 | Location of Jesús de Nazaret, Mi Barrio Mi Familia and Teresa de Calcuta in BdM



Source: Author

As explained with pride by one of the *dirigentas*:

> This plot is and was private, it was not donated by the SERVIU or the Municipality; in the case of *Mi Barrio Mi Familia* that plot was given by the Municipality, ours was private, and therefore our houses have a much higher value than theirs. They have the same structure, size, design, were made by the same construction company, but the location changes everything. Also because down there (in *Mi Barrio Mi Familia*), even if it is true that they are more secluded and protected, they do not have much access to transport, and we do. We can walk a little bit and get the F13 bus; we walk the other way and have the 18, F3, 209 and 230 buses.

This is a very important and significant change, not just because they save time commuting to their jobs or studies, but also in economic terms, as many inhabitants in less well-connected areas of BdM need to use collective taxis to get to bus stops, which can double their daily transport costs.

For the Second Opportunity, as has been said, more than 76% of the families whose destinations have been followed by the SERVIU stayed in Puente Alto *comuna,* and 60% of them stayed in the same territory of BdM. The beneficiaries of the Second Opportunity, however, faced an important challenge as the implementation of the programme and the use of vouchers created a new market, increasing prices in the surrounding areas and affecting affordability. Just after the implementation of the programme began, the residents started complaining about this fact, getting some attention from the media because of the political character of the programme. In a news note published in May 2013, and entitled '*Bajos de Mena residents criticise the demolition of blocks*', one of the residents points out: "This programme should not be called 'Second Opportunity, *the medicine was worse than the illness*'; people are sick, they do not know what to do, the money is not enough to move to a better house" (Cooperativa, 2013).

The professionals working on BdM and the residents of the area are aware of this situation. As a government official said "if the state gives subsidies of 800, then the market will increase the price of a house to 1,000". Another professional explains:

> There is a process of speculation; (…) people get around 18 million (700 UF) for the expropriation and subsidy, and that has increased the prices. At the

> beginning, the houses around the demolition were about 11 million, and now those houses are sold for 20-25 million. So people start saying '*we cannot leave, we do not have the means to leave, with the 18 million we do not have a better alternative'*. And that is why some people prefer to stay; they say, I have invested in this property and improved it, the 18 million are useless if I cannot find another property in this condition in the same area.

The phenomenon is easy to observe within the area. The community centre of Cerro Morado, which is also the headquarters of the SERVIU for the Second Opportunity, has become a centre for exchanging information and advertising for properties in the area (Figure 7.10). This kind of informal advertising take place in a context in which many of the parties have never been involved in a property transaction outside the vouchers system. As described by one of the SERVIU team members:

> People who are selling, are offering houses that were initially acquired with a subsidy, so they do not know either how to sell, or what the timing is, they do not understand the process of selling (…) this created a lot of misunderstanding and situations of conflict between them, and they usually know each other, they are relatives and know everything about each other.

Figure 7.10 | Advertisement of properties in Cerro Morado Community Centre

Source: Author

Table 7.3 summarises some of the asking prices displayed on this kind of board in the area. This information was collected both during this research in June 2015, and during previous research in January 2014 (Castillo, 2014). When compared with the maximum amount received for the houses (700 UF), the gap can be as high as 5.6 million in 2014 and 7.6 million in 2016[37].

Table 7.3 | Prices of some of the houses offered in Cerro Morado Community Centre

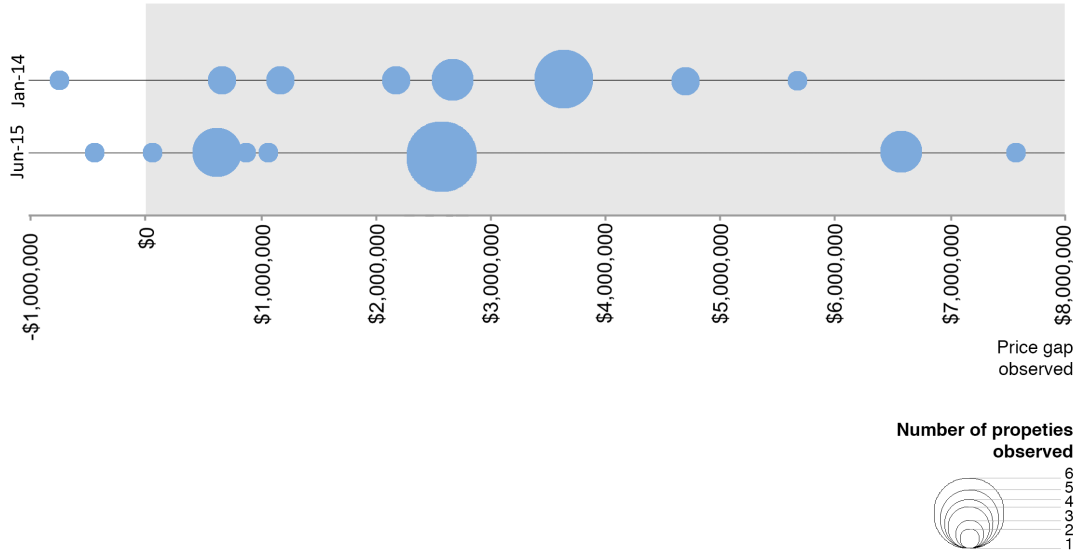
Location	Price Requested	Date	UF Value	700 UF Value	Difference
Villa Don Jaime	$ 15,574,000	January 2014	$ 23,312.57	$ 16,318,799	$ 744,799
Villa Chiloé I	$ 17,000,000				-$ 681,201
Villa San Miguel I	$ 17,000,000				-$ 681,201
Villa Sargento Menadier	$ 17,500,000				-$ 1,181,201
El Almendral	$ 18,000,000				-$ 1,681,201
Villa Chiloé	$ 18,500,000				-$ 2,181,201
Estaciones Ferroviarias I	$ 18,500,000				-$ 2,181,201
Su Casa	$ 19,000,000				-$ 2,681,201
Su Casa III	$ 19,000,000				-$ 2,681,201
Villa Chiloé I	$ 19,000,000				-$ 2,681,201
Villa Nocedal I	$ 20,000,000				-$ 3,681,201
Población Altos de Maipú	$ 20,000,000				-$ 3,681,201
Población Altos de Maipú	$ 20,000,000				-$ 3,681,201
Juanita Oriente	$ 20,000,000				-$ 3,681,201
Monseñor Alvear	$ 20,000,000				-$ 3,681,201
Población Altos de Maipú	$ 21,000,000				-$ 4,681,201
Su Casa III	$ 21,000,000				-$ 4,681,201
El Nocedal II	$ 22,000,000				-$ 5,681,201
Villa Nocedal II	$ 17,000,000	June 2015	$ 24,909.55	$ 17,436,685	$ 436,685
Villa Nuevo Amanecer	$ 17,500,000				-$ 63,315
Villa Nocedal	$ 18,000,000				-$ 563,315
Villa Todos los Santos	$ 18,000,000				-$ 563,315
Pasaje Duraznal 2560	$ 18,000,000				-$ 563,315
San Vicente 1589	$ 18,000,000				-$ 563,315
San José de la Estrella	$ 18,300,000				-$ 863,315
Villa Juanita	$ 18,500,000				-$ 1,063,315
Laguna Negra 0687	$ 20,000,000				-$ 2,563,315
Pasaje el Plomo 0478	$ 20,000,000				-$ 2,563,315
Cerro el Plomo 0577	$ 20,000,000				-$ 2,563,315
El Peñón	$ 20,000,000				-$ 2,563,315
Villa Los Canales	$ 20,000,000				-$ 2,563,315
Población Padre Demetrio	$ 20,000,000				-$ 2,563,315
Calle El Tranque 1626	$ 24,000,000				-$ 6,563,315
Calle El Tranque 1772	$ 24,000,000				-$ 6,563,315
Casa Esquina (n/i)	$ 24,000,000				-$ 6,563,315
San José de Las Claras	$ 25,000,000				-$ 7,563,315

***** *All values expressed in Chilean Pesos. UF value based on official information*
Source: Author. Information about January 2014 is from Castillo (2014); information about June 2015 collected by author.

[37] In March 2017, this gap is equivalent to around £6,900 in 2014, and £9,400 in 2016.

Figure 7.11 summarises the number of properties offered at different prices, organised according to the price gap observed in January 2014 and June 2015. While the information from January 2014 shows a majority of houses offered with a gap of almost CL$ 4M, in June 2015 the majority are around CL$ 3M. This can be explained by the fact that the value of 700 UF increased by almost 1M during that period. In addition, during June 2015 there were houses offered for more than CL$ 24M and CL$ 25M, with gaps in relation to the subsidy of almost CL$ 8M. In practice, just two of the cases observed had values below the level of subsidy available, so the beneficiaries of the Second Opportunity would need to use their savings or access to a loan in order to afford any of the other properties.

Figure 7.11 | Differences between prices in houses advertised and maximum subsidy provided



Source: Author

The role of the owners of properties offered to the beneficiaries of the Second Opportunity has also been very important. As someone from the SERVIU observed, the real beneficiaries of the programme, those who have achieved real mobility, have been in some cases those who are selling their houses at higher prices and have been able actually to move away. This market trap is key to understanding the kind of social and political difficulties that this programme has triggered in the territory. This chain of real estate speculation in the area goes so fast that even some people who bought a new house during the first call of the Second Opportunity in 2013-14 are offering the same house to

those beneficiaries of the second call of the programme during 2015 less than a year later and at a higher price.

This price gap suggests that many of the beneficiaries have been pushed to use savings, private loans (if they are able to get credit) or the extra 46 UF they get to cover costs of mobility in order to top up the 700 UF and afford a house in the area. Actually, the public appraisal made for the second call of the programme during 2015 showed that the prices of the blocks that were not demolished in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado had increased when compared with the appraisals of 2013, mainly because the appraisal took into consideration the market prices of adjacent neighbourhoods. Interestingly, this might have benefited the residents who take part in the second call of the programme, but has been very negative in economic terms for those who were part of the programme in its first version.

c. Livelihoods at the core of housing design

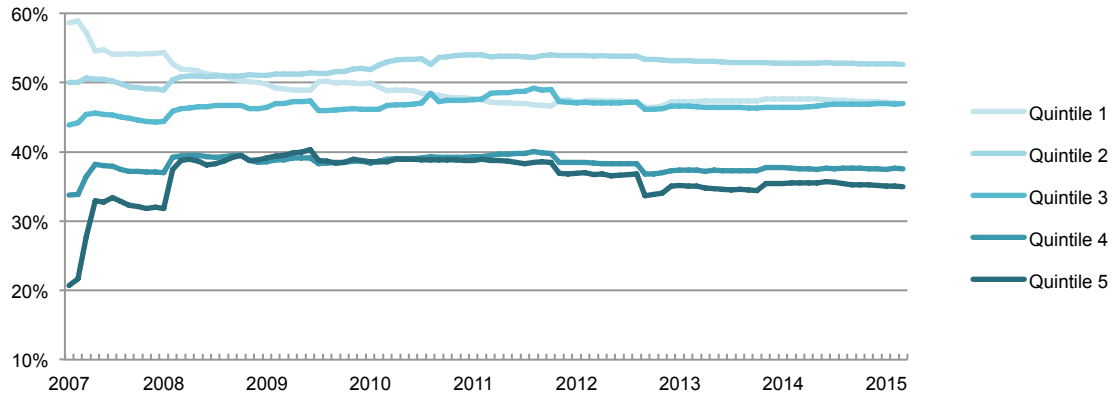
Have these programmes put the strengthening of livelihoods and sustainability at the core of housing design and production? This is a debate that needs to be linked to the understanding of the productive nature of the territory, and the productive networks present in it.

Unemployment in the *comuna* of Puente Alto has been generally similar to national rates. However, what is noteworthy about the occupation status in the *comuna* is the high level of economically inactive people, defined as people over 15 years of age who are neither working nor unemployed (students, retirees, other situations), and therefore are not part of the economically active population (Observatorio Social, n.d.). This trend is even more dramatic when we observe the two lowest quintiles, those who inhabit the BdM area (Figure 7.12).

This high percentage of inactive people in the poorest sectors of the district is explained by an economic reality that is shaped by factors far more complex than the lack of formal jobs. As discussed in Chapter 5, livelihoods in BdM are based on a combination of formal jobs, informal occasional work, and a series of networks of assistance, both formal

and informal. This precariousness is translated into a series of phenomena, including the lack of liquidity and resources for daily survival. To give just one example, explained by people from SERVIU, "the levels of debt in terms of water and electricity bills are extremely high, sometimes in one flat it can be a debt of 2 to 5 million[38], in a context where no more than 40% of the people work, and usually work for the minimum wage; everybody else is either *colero* in the market, they collect objects to sell them there or to recycle them…"

Figure 7.12 | Economically Inactive population over 15 years of age in Puente Alto, by quintile



Source: Source: Author, based on data from FPS score, Ministerio de Desarrollo Social

The network-based economy and the day-to-day livelihoods are very relevant both for understanding the housing decisions of BdM residents, and particularly for the economic implications of the two programmes for households. Additionally, this reality of precariousness is at the base of another phenomenon that, as we will discuss in this chapter, has economic, social and political implications: living with this precariousness is only possible due to a vast and strong network of assistance that works both at a formal level through local institutions, and at an informal level in the territory. These networks of assistance are not just important for an understanding of the local economy, but are actually indispensable to understanding the series of dynamics related to housing production.

The networks of assistance in the territory operate at different scales: relatives who take care of children when the parents need to go away, for work or any other reason;

[38] In March 2017, two to five million pesos are equal to approximately £2,500-£6,000.

neighbours who give assistance or lend money when there is a problem or urgent need; *dirigentas* who have a close knowledge of most of the economic problems each family has faced, who act as bridges with formal institution, and who help with making decisions and following the requirements of the authorities; municipal authorities and professionals who give individual and collective assistance, both in material, personal and institutional terms; and authorities (mayor, deputies, senators) who, through their own networks of clientelism, provide direct assistance to the residents. Just following on, for instance, from the example given previously about the enormous utility bill debts, a few years before the Second Opportunity started, political negotiations at a high level allowed a general absolution of most of the debt, fixing a maximum of CL$ 300,000[39] even if the original debts were over one or two million.

These networks of assistance and clientelism have a huge impact on the productive nature of the territory, and are at the core of many housing decisions made by the population. In particular, the networks explain the importance given by many people to staying in BdM, both for the families that are part of Jesús de Nazaret and for those who participated in the Second Opportunity. Even if formal jobs are not necessarily in the same area, the decision about staying in BdM has an economic and not just an emotional basis, linked to these networks. Particularly men, but also women, might have formal jobs outside BdM, sometimes very far from their homes, but this does not mean they want to leave the area. As one woman explains: "I have always worked, always. I work in the Shopping Mall *Parque Arauco*; it takes me around two hours to get there: I need to take a bus, then two underground trains, and then another bus". Even though the commuting seems difficult, she was very resistant to joining the Second Opportunity programme, and did not want to leave the area.

Understanding this complexity, the question is whether these programmes put the strengthening of livelihoods at the core of housing production. In the case of the DS49 it is important to remember the history of the families coming from El Volcán or other precarious conditions as *allegados,* and the multiple changes they had endured over the previous years. As mentioned by many residents, those changes implied losing assets,

[39] In March 2017, CL$300,000 are equal to approximately £370.

materials used for housing extensions, investments, and even sometimes livelihoods such as small businesses. The thing that was different about Jesús de Nazaret was that it allowed most families to take with them materials and elements that could be re-used in the new houses, as the municipality in coordination with the SERVIU provided trucks for the move. The fact that they were moving to a house with a garden allowed them to undertake future transformations of the houses in a much more secure and sustainable way. One of the *dirigentas* from El Volcán describes it like this:

> I brought everything from my flat in El Volcán: windows, frames, fences, everything I had put there; because I want to use it all here. Everything can be useful, my husband works as a builder, so we brought the tiles, everything, to put it here. I am a carpenter too, I am not working because of the girls – they are too young – but my life is also related to construction.

There is an important change compared with their previous and more precarious conditions, and they keep hold of the idea that they have arrived at a safe place, in which changes can be relatively permanent and therefore they have the space and time to transform their houses, to treat them as assets. One of the residents explains:

> I want to move the kitchen, increase the size of it and the dining room; and upstairs, I will build another bedroom for my son, so my daughter that is already big can have one for herself; and another bedroom for the young ones. But I want to do it slowly; I am not in a rush.

This adaptability for future economic and spatial changes is in many cases increased by the capability assets that families bring. Many people in BdM work in jobs linked to the construction sector. Adaptability is also enhanced by the networks of social, political and economic assistance described above. As one of the residents, who has a small grocery shop in her house, describes:

> My husband works in construction, but actually there are many of us at home. My daughter works outside as well, so she helps me. We understand that we all have to help him, support him; I pay the loan I got for my business, I have been three years with that. We need to look for the money, because the money does not arrive by itself.

In some cases, the better adaptability of the houses in comparison with their previous flats, has allowed residents of Jesús de Nazaret to enlarge their home-based businesses.

This is particularly true for those who have small grocery shops or any kind of business that involves interaction with the public. This is the case for one of the *dirigentas,* who reflects about how the change of house typology and location from El Volcán to her new house in Jesús de Nazaret is changing her business:

> (The business) is already better, there is higher customer flow and I sell more. I am still waiting for the provisional permit, but it is already better (…) Then I want to build an extension to put the store outside, in a bigger space and directly facing the main road.

The conditions for improving livelihoods for the families in Jesús de Nazaret definitely increased in comparison with their previous conditions in terms of location (closer to the main roads and connections), size (from 42.5 to 55.6sqm, with possibilities for extensions), security of tenure (from precarious and temporary conditions to a formalised solution) and adaptability (houses with garden, with possibilities for extensions),

The case of the Second Opportunity is slightly more complex to analyse, as families moved from Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado to different destinations. However, both the process and the effects of the programme in the territory can be observed from a livelihoods perspective. We will discuss here the reality of two different groups: those residents who were part of the programme and decided either to leave BdM or to get a property in the same territory; and those who, inhabiting Francisco Coloane or Cerro Morado, decided to stay in their houses and not to join the programme.

As described above, a significant number of the families who were part of the programme stayed in BdM, and most of these bought houses in the same district. This, however, was due to the individual decisions of the beneficiaries, and not to a plan envisaged by the programme. Actually, the injection of vouchers in the area and the consequent increase of real estate prices in the adjacent neighbourhoods, acted in many cases as a barrier for the families who wanted to stay close to their assistance and economic networks.

The process of leaving and dismantling the houses is a key event in the implementation of the programme. On the one hand, it is a moment in which many tensions arise: for families who are illegally occupying flats and need to move to another temporary places;

for families who, being formally part of the programme, have significant utility debts and need to regularise their situation before leaving (most residents use the 46 UF voucher for this); for families who still don't have a place to move and decide either to stay in the half-dismantled buildings or to move to another temporary place. The day of moving is also the day on which families bring all the construction materials, objects, and assets they have put in their houses to their new houses: windows, frames, doors, pipes, copper wires, etc. Some people go up to the roof to take out the wooden trusses, that are later sold for CL$10,000[40] each to local recyclers, notwithstanding the risk of going up with no protection and coming into contact with pieces of broken asbestos (that are supposed to be removed later on by a company) all over the roof (Figure 7.13).

Figure 7.13 | Leaving and dismantling blocks in Francisco Coloane

***** *Top-left: Moving day with trucks provided by SERVIU; top-right: two men removing wooden trusses from the roof; bottom-left: wires are removed by residents to be sold or reused; bottom-right: state of a flat after residents have left.*
Source: Author

[40] In March 2017, CL$ 10,000 are approximately £12.00

A conversation with a professional who worked on the design and implementation of the programme from the Ministry during Piñera's government is very revealing about the way in which the authorities visualised it. As they saw so many problems in BdM, the incentives were aimed as far as possible at facilitating the capacity to *leave*: "We gave flexibilities in terms of buying a new plot, put money on it, we tried to give as many options and as much flexibility as possible, as we wanted to give incentives for families to leave, so those who wanted to could leave".

In spite of these incentives, however, most families decided to stay. Why? Mainly because of the networks described above. Interestingly, professionals from SERVIU who had been working in the territory for longer and knew the reality on the ground were not surprised:

> We always knew that people would choose to stay, because they depend on a complete network of social assistance, from the mother who looks after the children, to the municipality that delivers food-boxes. Everything. And also because many people don't know how to buy a house, they don't have the market logic; these are people who lived in an informal settlement, were evacuated, moved, got a subsidy, and the Ministry decided where they would live, and they stayed there for 18 years, in the conditions that the Ministry left them, with assistance from all other public institutions… and then this programme arrives and says '*go and buy a house!*'

This lack of housing market expertise manifested itself in the fact that many people moved to older houses that did not necessarily have better conditions than those they left in Francisco Coloane or Cerro Morado. Also, many people used the same networks of assistance, particularly from the *dirigentes,* to make market decisions, in some cases even asking them to actually choose their new houses. This dependency, as we will discuss later, affects more than just economic reality and has serious implications in social and political terms as well.

Those who decided not to apply to the programme but to stay in their homes had different economic reasons for doing so. Some of them were the owners of properties but did not live in them, renting them through the market, and as this was a secure source of monthly income, they did not find the Second Opportunity an appealing option. Others

did not want to move because they were associated with illegal activities such as drug trafficking, and saw the demolitions and potential displacement as a threat to their business and networks. And others just did not want to apply because of fear, lack of awareness, uncertainty, or just unwillingness to leave. As we will discuss later, some of these residents who lived in blocks where the majority wanted to leave faced hostility and even violence. As an intermediate solution, the programme offered some swap options with flats in neighbouring blocks in which there was a minority of families who wanted to leave. Those who did swap, got a voucher of 55 UF[41] for 'assisted self-help', that could be used just in one particular construction retail store (as a 'gift card') in order to refurbish the flat they were given in exchange for their original one. This deepened and strengthened the market logic of housing production and appropriation.

But probably the most serious economic and livelihood consequence of the application of this programme for the people in BdM was the absolute absence of any basis in the logic of territorial economy. Both the families who stayed in their houses and those who left them to move to another in the same area would face the same precarious conditions or even worse ones. The programme focused exclusively on the distribution of vouchers and the demolition of blocks, and therefore the economic and productive consequences for the territory were either completely left to market logic, or were actually directly destroyed through the very concrete action of demolition.

The variety of realities that both programmes present makes it very difficult to present a general conclusion regarding their consequences for family livelihoods, but it seems clear that livelihoods were not a key priority in the design and implementation of the programmes, but rather a side effect, in the case of Jesús de Nazaret with some positive consequences, and in the case of the Second Opportunity with more problematic ones. In any case, the logic of productivity and livelihoods is very much diminished by programmes designed exclusively with an individual voucher logic, neglecting the networked nature of the economic reality of the area.

[41] In March 2017, 55 UF = £1,800.

7.2 Social inequalities: Are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a platform to the city?

As discussed in the previous chapters, we understand social inequalities to mean the unequal access to rights and services that, when discussed in the urban field, is particularly linked to the idea of right to the city. In this section, as with the case of economic inequalities, we will first analyse the main features from an institutional perspective; and then we will reflect on the consequences of the programmes in terms of social inequalities in the territory, discussing first the idea of land as an individual commodity vs. land as a social asset and housing as a means of service provision, and then reflecting on some of the consequences of the programmes in terms of the experience of the city, networks, rights, and violence.

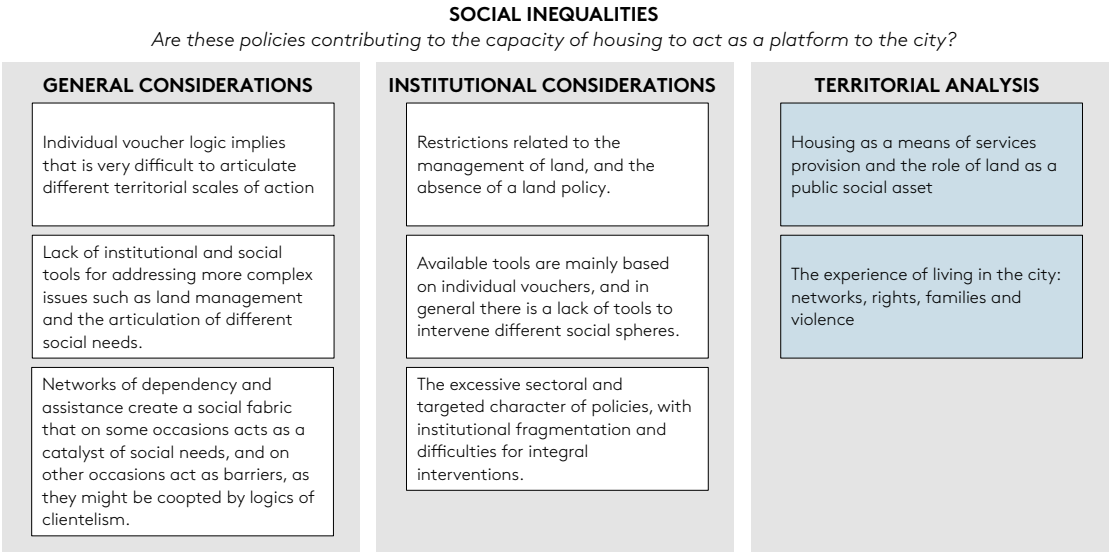
As an introduction to the main findings, there is a series of general elements that appeared repeatedly as key aspects, and that are very much aligned with those introduced in relation to economic inequalities:

- The understanding of housing policies as a financial system based on individual voucher provision implies that it is very difficult to articulate different territorial scales of action, beyond the individual units and local neighbourhood, and incorporating housing production, the provision of services, transport, infrastructure and a systemic understanding of the city logic.

- There is a general lack of institutional and social tools for addressing more complex issues such as land management, the articulation of different social needs and the increase of rights and capabilities.

- The complex networks of dependency and assistance present in vulnerable territories create a social fabric that on some occasions acts as a catalyst of social needs, addressing and managing claims and responses, and on other occasions acts as a barrier, as they might be co-opted by logics of clientelism.

Figure 7.14 | Social inequalities: Main aspects of analysis



Source: Author

7.2.1 Social inequalities: Institutional considerations

In institutional terms, there was a series of elements that appear as key aspects to an understanding of the limitations and scope of policies in promoting housing as a platform to the city, many of which overlap with those described for the economic aspect. Firstly, in order to have policies that regard housing as a platform to the city, as discussed previously, one of the main aspects that institutions should consider is land management. And Chile does not have a land policy that allows public institutions to participate properly in land markets, to use them for social ends, and to coordinate land interventions in terms of housing production as part of a more complex urban network.

This is a problem that is widely acknowledged by current housing and urban authorities, and even though there have been some changes and there is now the political will to transform institutions in this direction through the implementation of the new National Urban Policy, PNDU, the programmes we are analysing were developed under a complete absence of land policies. The complexity of land markets is described by the head of the Housing Policy Division (DPH) of the MINVU in an interview as follows: "Land is a very complex issue, it is not that there is no land as the media tries to crudely simplify; the issue is whether or not land is available for some kind of development"

(Gramsch, 2014). This is a shared vision within the MINVU; the head of the Urban Development Division (DDU), Pablo Contrucci, explains:

> In Chile, when you refer to land management, it is like talking about Mars; that is the kind of reactions you have, for instance, from the real estate sector. They might say *'sure, it would be great if there were land management in Chile, so the Ministry should go and buy land and then put it into the market'*. And we know that if the Ministry does that – actually, it does do it – we would be refuelling the market so it could produce exactly the same segregation it produces today, even more strongly. Therefore, we need to understand land management differently: it is about endowing the state and the private sector with mechanisms that allow them to be more aggressive and assertive in creating urban land with the logic of social and functional integration (Contrucci, 2014).

Academics and activists have identified these institutional barriers previously. In the view of the academic and practitioner Alfredo Rodriguez, while market logic is still ruling land distribution and management, any effort from the state to generate incentives for integration and access to the city is in vain. In his words:

> The problem is that with a relentless land market like this one, any mechanism or incentive is absorbed by the market, and therefore there is a need to break the market. This was done before by the illegal occupations of land (*tomas*), but the system now ensures that your land will not be occupied… some have said that maybe the only solution will come if the *tomas* start again, if there is uncertainty again about land investment and speculation (Rodriguez, 2014).

This discussion is linked to the second institutional aspect identified, the lack of instruments other than subsidies for the provision of integral housing and urban solutions. Nowadays the Ministry of Housing basically uses tools limited to subsidies, economic incentives and restrictions, but it faces serious problems when it tries to address more complex, integral and multidimensional problems that require cooperation between different state sectors, designing tools beyond abstract subsidies, and different scales of action in the territory. In relation to this, Alfredo Rodriguez reflects:

> For the Ministry of Housing, innovation is understood as combining subsidies, when actually the problem *is* the individual subsidy. Nothing will change while individual subsidies and vouchers remain; they need to implement forms of collective subsidies, or return to the direct intervention of the ministry (Rodriguez, 2014).

During the interviews, two particular pitfalls were detected as the main obstacles to diversifying the nature of the instruments available beyond vouchers and individual subsidies. Firstly, there is what the director of the DDU called *institutional cultural change:* "we don't have local positive references to densification or social integration, we just have negative references or no references at all; and therefore it is very difficult to discuss real projects rather than ghosts" (Contrucci, 2014). And secondly, there is a legal rigidity that goes far beyond the competence of the Ministry of Housing, and that limits and constrains the capacity of this ministry and others to innovate in the way they operate in the territory. In relation to this, for example, the General Comptroller has already stopped the actions of Municipalities that have tried to innovate in the instruments they have for intervening in the territory.

This rigidity is also linked to the third institutional aspect identified, which has been already discussed in the case analysis of economic inequalities: the excessively sectoral and targeted character of policies, with institutional fragmentation and difficulties with integral interventions. Sectoral reforms cannot be integrally implemented at least there is a process of strengthening the public infrastructure, the community services and the cultural values that support them (Cociña and Rebolledo, 2014). The city is a systemic body, and any intervention that aims to tackle social inequalities and to incorporate a wider spectrum of rights and services will inevitably face the need for multi-sectoral coordination and action. In the case of the MINVU, there is a tradition of fragmentation within the different units of the Ministry (DPH and DDU; SERVIU and SEREMI; National and Regional teams; etc.), and also a lack of coordination between the Ministry and other units of the state. "In the MINVU each unit looks at its own ranch", "the team from that other unit was sinister", "they looked at us with distrust" etc., were phrases commonly used during interviews with government officials and authorities.

This fragmentation becomes even more dramatic when considering the differences in perception between those who work in the central government offices and those who work on the ground. On many occasions they would describe the same situation in extraordinarily different ways, showing how disconnected they are from each other.

7.2.2 Social inequalities: Territorial analysis

a. Housing as a means of service provision and the role of land as a social asset

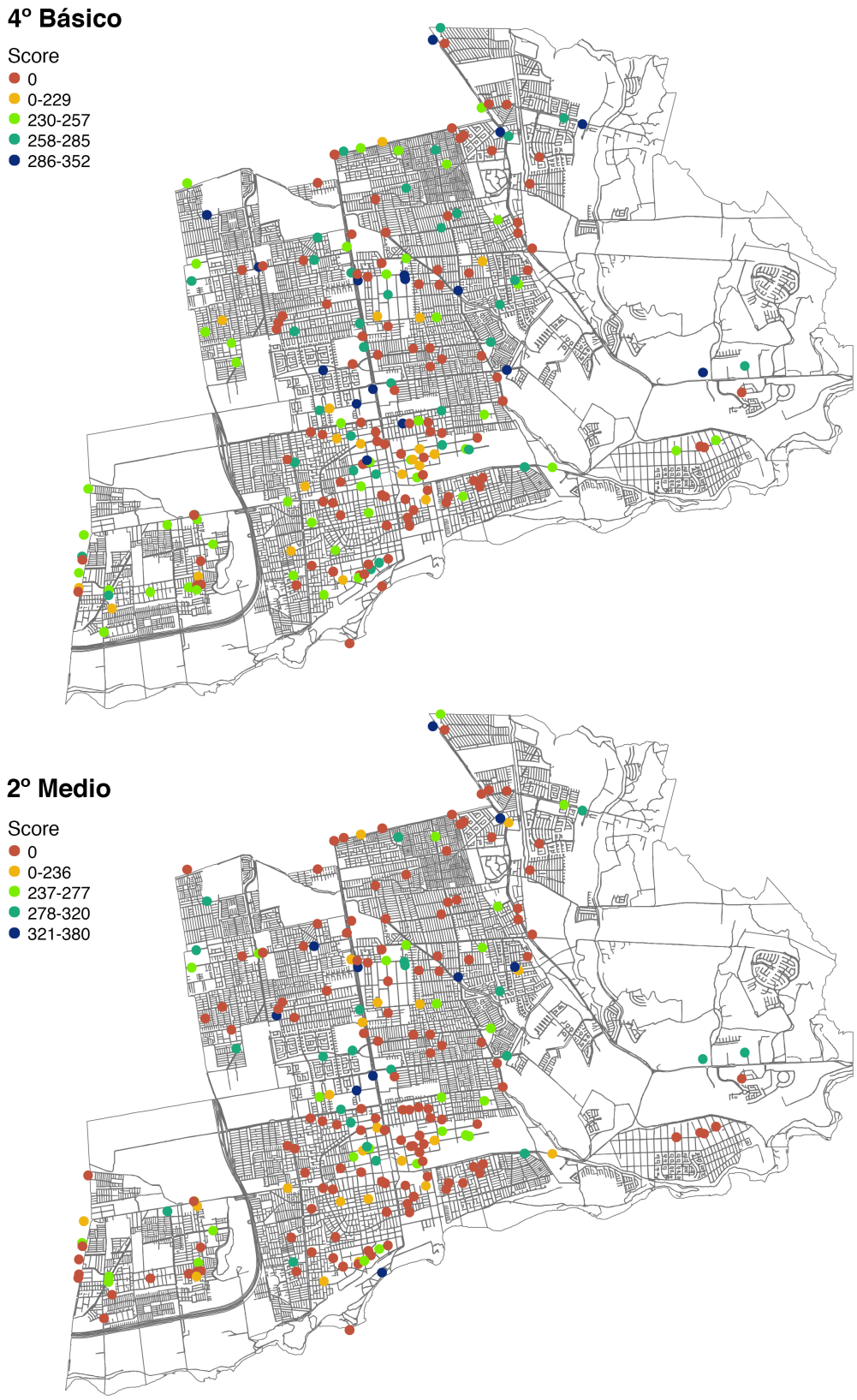
We have discussed the importance of understanding housing production as a means of providing and creating a wider system of services that include infrastructure, cultural and educational services, systems of public spaces, transport, and the set of goods associated with the city as an indivisible right. In many cases the location of housing within the city provides access to these networks and systems. But in cases such as BdM and the peripheral residential areas of big cities like Santiago, this is not a given, and therefore the discussion about land acquisition, management, and use design becomes key.

As was identified in many interviews and shown by the data, BdM presents a problem of social and functional integration. It is not just that there are houses for only one kind of socioeconomic group, but also that there are neighbourhoods that only have houses. There are no public facilities, and no integration with the rest of the city. One of the few facilities available in the area is schools. If we look at the performance in the National System for Measurement of the Quality of Education (SIMCE), both at Fourth Primary grade (4º Básico) and at Second Secondary grade (2º Medio), the results in BdM are lower than in the rest of the district, and none of the Schools presents scores in the higher band (Figure 7.15).

It is not surprising then that the level of dependence on the rest of the city is very high. But at the same time, the rest of the city is seen as something distant and strange, particularly for children and women, the groups that stay the most within the area. Women and children would look surprised to know that I, even though a researcher, came from somewhere 'outside Puente Alto'. For them, coming from 'outside' would usually mean coming from the Municipality of Puente Alto. Anything more distant than that – for example the city centre – just sounds remarkably far away.

Understanding that this is the territorial reality where both programmes act, it becomes very relevant to ask to what extent they are contributing to the idea of housing as a platform to the city, not just analysing the location of the houses built, but particularly unpacking the way in which these programmes are *building the city*.

Figure 7.15 | Maps: SIMCE performance for 4º Básico and 2º Medio, 2012, Puente Alto



Source: Author, based on data of Centro de Inteligencia Territorial, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

In the case of the DS49 in Jesús de Nazaret, even though the change of locations for the families puts them closer to some services and connections, the neighbourhood was built with the same mono-functional approach that has characterised Chilean social housing production during recent decades. As was discussed in the case of economic inequalities, the change of location had a positive impact on people's daily life, and put them closer to facilities, transport and to the only connection to the rest of Puente Alto through Av. Eyzaguirre. Many of the residents referred to this as an important issue: avoiding the long and dangerous walks to get access to public transport has been a major change, particularly for those who work outside BdM, and for young people that study outside the area.

But beyond the change of location, which can be seen as specific to this particular project and determined by the availability of empty land in a better location within BdM, it is worth asking to what extent the production of housing itself produces a city with more integrated services in a wider sense. And in particular it is worth asking to what extent, in Jesús de Nazaret, land was conceived as a social asset in which common value can be created, beyond individual subdivision. Regarding this point, and beyond the efforts of the DS49 to provide social support before and after the construction through the EGIS, there is still a huge deficit from the programme. Beyond some secondary green areas and a community centre, the neighbourhood can be considered as functional and socially homogenous as the rest of BdM, without any effort to build a different reality.

This is a very critical feature, because, as has been discussed previously, the policy debate has focused on this challenge for many years now. Some instruments (mainly subsidies and economic incentives) have been developed to improve the quality of houses, increase their size and encourage some social involvement in the process, and even to promote social mixture in the construction of housing. However, as most of the decisions regarding the design and construction of new neighbourhoods are in the hands of developers and tend to serve their own economic interests, they keep following the same logic: socially and functionally homogenous neighbourhoods, optimising earning from economies of scale and cheap land. This is a point that is conceded by the Ministry authorities. As one of them from the DDU asserts:

> This morning we had a meeting with the Minister, and she said: *you know, the SEREMI of Santiago has approved a project of 3,000 units, and we are doing them exactly the same as 20 years ago.* The same – and that should not happen: 3,000 units, no school, no facilities. And that is happening now, during the second government of Bachelet.

The case of Jesús de Nazaret is less dramatic than the one described in the interview, as it only has 547 units. But BdM is already known for its problems in terms of social and functional homogeneity, and this implies that the challenge of service provision and the understanding of land as a social asset should be at the core of the design – but they are not.

The case of the Second Opportunity in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado is as striking as Jesús de Nazaret or even more so. According to those who worked in the design and implementation of the programme, the ideas of *master plan* and *urban regeneration* were at the core of the programme narrative and goals when it was conceived. However, there was a series of institutional and political factors that implied that even if the intentions were different prior to the programme implementation, the execution of it lacked any kind of urban vision. In the words of one of the professionals behind the programme during Piñera's government:

> At the beginning, I saw the Second Opportunity as an urban regeneration tool, working at the urban rather than the household scale, but then I realised that the programme by itself could not achieve that goal (…) there were many pressures; the programme had to be very visible and had a short time to be implemented, so we had to act and demonstrate that it was working; we had to demolish, and we had to do it fast (…) I liked the initial vision of the programme, I saw lots of potential in it: having 3-4 months for discussing with the families and all the actors involved, for doing a social mapping and a Master Plan for urban regeneration, with demolitions, who would move, who would switch, we could renovate some 3x2 flats, etc. But we had to do it fast, because we needed visibility and to show that we were actually demolishing (…) In that sense, this was a laboratory, a guinea pig. It was about having a first round of demolitions to show that those who wanted to leave, could make it.

The atmosphere of political pressures so well-portrayed by the description above adds to the fact that, in institutional terms, the programme just has a five-pages document

(MINVU, 2013b), that allows SERVIU to use housing subsidies in these exceptional conditions. Therefore, once again, there are institutional pitfalls in doing anything other than providing vouchers. Professionals from the SERVIU would portray the situation as follows: "The programme doesn't have its own instrument, it uses instruments that are part of the housing policy, and therefore it has to borrow tools, to invent, to adapt existing tools to a situation that is very different". There is a feeling of self-criticism about the programme implementation, particularly in the Metropolitan SERVIU. Another professional would add: "we are giving a *'housing solution'*, that is basically a subsidy, not a house, not a house-key for house-key, and we demolish. That is all".

The scenario after the demolitions is basically a patchwork of empty plots, blocks still occupied, and blocks half-dismantled but half occupied. As has been explained, the *voluntary* nature of the programme implied that it was not possible to elaborate any kind of master planning or design in terms of the use of land. And even if the land was acquired by the SERVIU, the institutional constrains described above did not ease the capacity for intervening the territory, and nothing has been built in the area so far.

Even though some of the people who left might have moved to *better* locations in terms of access, what the programme has given to the territory, for those who stay in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado and the neighbourhoods next to them, could be seen as exactly the contrary of *building the city*. And land, acquired by the SERVIU through the expropriation and subsidies, is understood neither as a public good nor as a collective asset: rather, it is seen as a fatality, as a 'left over', as a dump. The scene in BdM after the demolitions recalls some reflections about the normalisation of a landscape where dignity has disappeared, like those so magnificently presented by Susan Sontag in her 1973 book, 'On Photography' about the capacity of images to make atrocities wear off:

> To suffer is one thing; another thing is living with the photographed images of suffering, which does not necessarily strengthen conscience and the ability to be compassionate. It can also corrupt them. Once one has seen such images, one has started down the road of seeing more - and more. Images transfix. Images anesthetize. (…) The vast photographic catalogue of misery and injustice throughout the world has given everyone a certain familiarity with atrocity,

> making the horrible seem more ordinary - making it appear familiar, remote ("it's only a photograph"), inevitable (Sontag, 1979:20-21).

Landscapes can have a similar effect to photography, and in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado, the after-demolition landscapes have normalised the diminishing of the dignity of land and people, transforming it into something that can be seen as ordinary and inevitable – as normal (Figure 7.16). The scholar Alfredo Rodriguez has called the phenomenon produced by the demolitions a '*normalisation of obsolescence*' in housing production. The idea that a housing programme should provide a platform to the city, and that land should be treated as a collective good, has been completely dismantled by the Second Opportunity in BdM.

Figure 7.16 | Landscapes of abandonment in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado

Source: Author

b. The experience of living in the city: Networks, rights, families and violence

The notion of social inequality and housing as a platform to the city does not refer exclusively to access to services, the location of housing and the land management issue. As discussed in previous chapters, social inequality incorporates quantitative and qualitative aspects, including elements of distribution and recognition, and of the experience of daily life at different levels. Tackling social inequalities implies improving people's interpersonal life experience, with their neighbours, with the built environment, and with the rest of the city. The idea of housing as a platform to the city is intimately related to the capacity of housing to build an environment able to trigger a way of living in which networks, rights and life dreams can be fully experienced, reconciling gender perspectives, the balance between private and public life, and neutralising the effects of violence.

In this section we will review how these different aspects, some of which have already been discussed in Chapter 5, have shaped housing decisions and have been shaped or changed by the implementation of both programmes.

Firstly, there are conditions related to the personal history of the families and the condition of life inside the home. In most of the interviews with householders, a woman was at the centre of the family structure, not just because she was in charge of managing the house, but also because she was the actual node between the members of the household. As discussed in Chapter 5, cases of domestic violence and alcoholism are common. Most of the time, the histories of precariousness start inside the family, with overcrowded houses, and broken family bonds. Women usually refer to how the children are at the core of these tales, protecting those who *turn good,* taking care of those who are *lost,* and finding ways to stay close to grandchildren, directly affecting the way in which the family group decides to move or stay.

For both Jesús de Nazaret and the Second Opportunity, these aspects of intimate family history were fundamental to decisions taken by members of the household, and are worth looking at. For many people in Jesús de Nazaret, leaving El Volcán or their previous condition as *allegados* implied a process of emancipation from their own history of

violence, leaving behind the homes where they faced struggles and abuse. These kinds of stories were present in almost all conversations. The houses in Jesús de Nazaret represent a new beginning, a secure place in which to rebuild and redefine their family relationships, in which to give space for the proper development of children who *turned good,* and to take care in a more spacious environment of those, for example older people with health problems or disabilities, who face particular problems. Also, a frequently expressed hope was that younger children would have more opportunities to *turn good* in this new environment. But for many people, leaving behind *lost* sons and daughters, and in some cases grandchildren as well, implied that the ties with their previous neighbourhood would remain, particularly with El Volcán. As one of the residents describes, "I am very apprehensive with my younger children, because we used to live in El Volcán, and you know how it is… one of my daughters tried to beat me once, she is terrible, she stayed there".

In the case of the Second Opportunity, this feeling of emancipation was even stronger for the people who left Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado, as for many of them the programme also involved leaving BdM. The reality, however, is of course not as simple. For many women it was very complex making the decision to apply to the demolition programme, given this story of suffering, as they felt attached to the home that had witnessed their struggles over the last two decades, and the personal relationship with that complex personal story is sometimes ambivalent. For some of them, particular bonds with their past stopped them from joining the programme. As one woman with a particularly violent history that involved the death of two of her children describes: "The *dirigentas* tried very hard to convince me to leave but I didn't want to; it was when my grandson was born that I decided to move, for him and my daughter, to start again". For others, however, these stories of violence were at the core of their willingness to leave the neighbourhood, as, for example, in the case of a woman whose son had died in a fire in prison a couple of years earlier, and her main motivation was to leave BdM as soon as possible in order to keep moving forward. As has been discussed, however, for those families who stayed in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado the scenario after the demolitions has strengthened the conditions for complex episodes of violence and a harsh life path.

On top of the personal history of the families, a second aspect relates to the collective experience of living together. As has been discussed, the levels of violence, the fights between different gangs, and the insecurity of public spaces, are common issues in BdM. Many stories would refer to the fear experienced when walking through some particular sectors of BdM, the acknowledgement of frequent episodes of violence, and the regular shootings that were part of the daily landscape. When referring to the reality of their original neighbourhoods, there is strong feeling about the control of the territory exercised by drug trading organisations. This control is about the drug market, but also on occasions these organisations respond to emergencies, or protect the area from violence arising from outside their own organisation. In that sense, the relationship of these networks with formal community organisations is a complex one, as there are some examples of fighting and others of collaboration.

In this context, there are important implications for the DS49 and the Second Opportunity in terms of the collective experience of living together as a key component of social inequalities. For Jesús de Nazaret residents, it is very explicit that the *bad times* had been left behind, and with them, the *bad people.* In that sense, the *dirigentas* were very emphatic about the fact that there were no drug dealers and people involved in gangs among the families that moved to Jesús de Nazaret. From the perspective of some of the professionals, however, this is a very difficult and brave distinction to make. As has been said, these networks are very much part of the social fabric in the area (relatives, friends, networks of assistance and protection, etc.), and drawing a line in binary terms is unreal. Anyway, there is a hope associated with the new environment in the new neighbourhood, as portrayed by one of the residents:

> I was anxious to move here, I wanted to be here, in my house, to have something for myself, being able to decorate it as I want to. We are still in a mess and there are many things to accommodate, but we are already here. This is already a different life. Last night I was upstairs, I looked out the window and I didn't see the rubbish I was used to in El Volcán, I didn't see the gangs smoking, the guys fighting. People here are working, cleaning. I hope this doesn't decline and things keep like this. It is lovely to be here, it is calm. In El Volcán we would go to bed with a shooting and wake up with another one. But that is over.

As mentioned, these reflections take place in the context that leaving BdM was usually not an option. The *dirigentes* of El Volcán that moved to Jesús de Nazaret were working for a housing solution *with dignity,* but without leaving the territory. As one of them states: "I don't leave, this is my world (…). Actually it was not even an option in my mind to leave (BdM), my issue was to leave El Volcán, to move to a house".

Regarding the Second Opportunity, the institutional logic and perspective of the authorities put all the attention on the families that were leaving, literally leaving behind those who were staying. There is no doubt about the relevance of taking care of the stock of housing in Social Condos, given the critical conditions that some of them present. Then, the criticism of the Second Opportunity is not about *what* it is doing, but about *how* it is doing it. Yes, there is an urgent need for serious alternatives and solutions, but *leaving* was the only option publicly supported.

Some professionals who worked on the design of the programme would refer to the decision to stay as one that "escapes any logic", as they were giving all the "incentives and encouragement" to leave. Of course this analysis omits the importance of dependency networks, already discussed. There is also a kind of *myth* built around the idea that those who leave were upgrading: many authorities would refer to the story of "the family who moved to Chiloé"[42] as proof of how dramatically beneficial the change had been. But that is actually an isolated case. By contrast, those professionals working on the ground were very conscious of how this kind of idealisation was also affecting the perspective of those who stayed and who felt completely left behind.

The families who stayed in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado have to deal not just with the unsolved problems of violence, but more importantly, with more precarious physical conditions, with wasteland, and the bleak landscapes described above. There is also a general feeling of uncertainty and in many cases ignorance about how the programme works. Additionally, as we will discuss further in the next section, the process of implementation of the Second Opportunity opened a series of social and political

[42] Chiloé is an island located more than 1,000 km from Santiago, in the south of Chile, with idyllic landscapes and a rural environment.

conflicts that fragmented even more the social fabric between those who wanted to stay, those who wanted to leave, and the *dirigentes*. Related to the latter, some *dirigentas* who pushed very hard to support the programme and were among the main pro-demolition agents, had a key position of power with the rest of the residents partly because of the *dirigentas'* control – as gate-keepers – of most of the assistance networks, but also because of their knowledge about the personal life and constraints of most residents. Intimacy is a scarce resource in most neighbourhoods in BdM, and the lack of it is the basis of the control of dependency networks that *dirigentas* hold. As we will see more clearly in the next section, this pressure from the *dirigentas* and the climate of unrest even translated into episodes of violence for those who, for legitimate reasons, did not want to join the demolition programme.

The effects of both programmes in terms of social inequalities are very difficult to portray in a simple way. Using the notion of platform to the city as an approach, this section has presented a series of considerations about what kinds of city, land management, and social relationships these two programmes have promoted or influenced. It is clear that, even if some particular social aspects – especially in the case of Jesús de Nazaret – changed and improved in important ways, the overall approach of the housing policy is still very limited in urban terms, lacking appropriate institutional tools, and without the capacity to work with the complexities of the social fabric.

7.3 Political inequalities: Are these policies contributing to the capacity of housing to act as a collective process?

Are these policies contributing to generating more equal access to power, thus decreasing political inequalities? In this section, as in the case of considering economic and social inequalities, we will first introduce the main issues from an institutional perspective, and then reflect on the consequences of the programmes in terms of political inequalities in the territory. We will focus particularly on three aspects: firstly, discussing the idea of clientelism as a barrier to political transformation, as networks of clientelism became one of the main features observed in the research; then, discussing how the idea of individual freedom and bureaucratic procedures have overtaken the value of participation; and

finally discussing the notion of scale in housing policies and the challenges in terms of citywide processes (Figure 7.17).

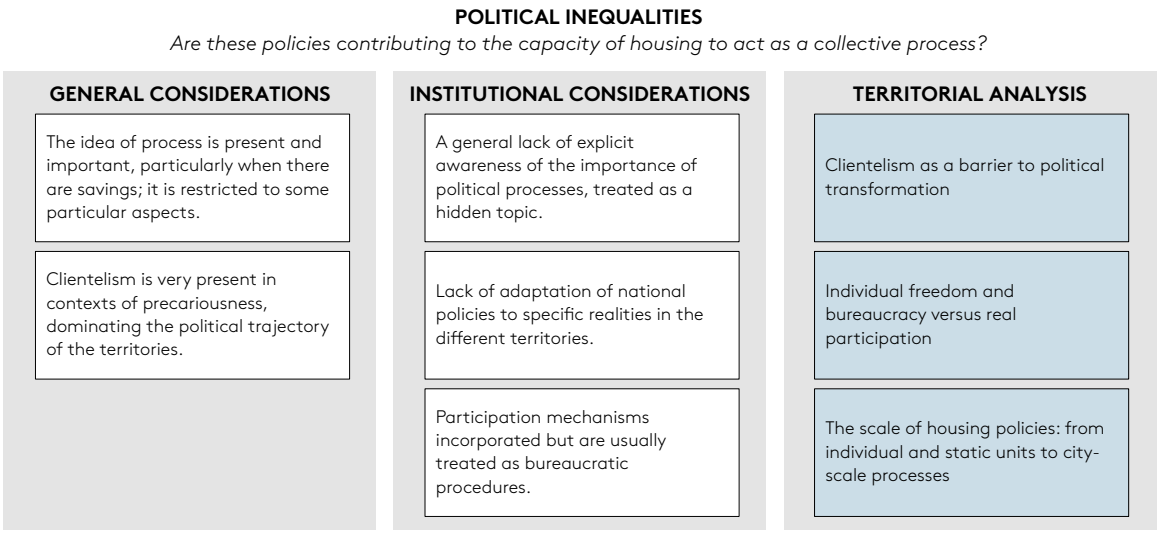
Political inequalities are not something limited to some specific territories, and this is probably, from the three dimensions studied, the one that is more clearly spread through different segments of the society and the city. However, as we will discuss later in the analysis, the specific characteristics of BdM, exacerbated by the housing and physical configurations, are a particularly fertile terrain for the aggravation of them. Particularly, the concentration of precarious living conditions, vulnerable to the presence of external political interests articulated through clientelistic networks, the conflictive nature of a series of processes, and the lack of leverage of many of its residents, intensify the conditions to deepen political inequalities. In sum, even if political inequalities are not a problem exclusive from BdM, a series of conditions of the territory put them as a central feature compared to other areas of the city.

As a general introduction to the main findings, there are two general considerations that appeared repeatedly as key aspects:

- Based on the series of changes in the policies, the idea of process and social support in housing programmes is present and important, both in preparation for housing construction and during and after houses are built. This is particularly strong when there are processes of savings and collective organisation. However, it is sometimes restricted just to some particular aspects and time-frameworks.

- Clientelism is one of the main issues that this research has encountered in understanding political inequalities. The urban concentration of precariousness in an enclosed territory sustains the political dynamics that deepen practices of clientelism, limiting the capacities of self-determination of citizens, and dominating the political trajectory of the territory.

Figure 7.17 | Political inequalities: Main aspects of analysis



Source: Author

7.3.1 Political inequalities: Institutional considerations

Contrary to the institutional constraints on reducing economic and social inequalities, the issues related to political inequalities were relatively absent from interviews and conversations with government officials and authorities. It seems that political transformation is not considered as an explicit goal, and therefore its absence is not even seen as an important matter. This absence by itself constitutes an institutional constraint, as instruments and tools will hardly trigger political transformation if they are not pursuing it. It also contrasts with the historical tradition of Chilean slum dwellers or *pobladores* playing a central political role (Castells, 1973), and the relative importance that residents' organisations are having in some processes of urban development in Santiago (Cociña and López-Morales, 2017).

This absence of institutional awareness implies that some issues in the territory remain hidden from the eyes of institutions and government officials, or are seen as disconnected from the effects of housing policies in the territory. This is the case for instances of clientelism, for even if it is implicit or explicitly mentioned on occasions, it is rarely seen as an issue related to housing production, and remains as a hidden topic when referring to spatial or urban phenomena.

A second dynamic emerging from this lack of awareness is the lack of attention to the idea of process in housing programmes. Even though there are time frameworks and social support in a series of moments, it is usually limited to very particular times, and the authorities frequently see it as *wasted time*. In relation to the Second Opportunity, for example, one government official on the ground says:

> We first arrived here saying that we would have a diagnosis period, for several months, with surveys, a census, etc., a long period of work to define what to do. So we presented the programme in every block, to all the residents; and one month later the government published the first call… we were all shocked. And of course for this first call people didn't have their paperwork ready, and the legal document was so poor that it didn't even specify that the residents needed the property certificate. Everyone was confused, some people arrived at our office saying: '*I want to return my flat*'.

Despite this lack of explicit awareness of the politically transformative potentials of housing policies, some concerns expressed during the interviews provide evidence of the importance of understanding housing as a process, and the existence of institutional barriers. One concern is the lack of adaptation of national policies to specific realities in the different territories. Chile is a very centralised country, so this is an issue frequently found with regional and local authorities, and it directly affects the capacity of programmes to interact with different territorial and political realities. As a government official reflects:

> Sometimes we try to impose a policy of urban renewal at the national level without considering that each territory, even within the same district, has different and particular realities. This is a terrible mistake and we notice it on the ground all the time.

The other institutional constraint found is the fact that even if some participation mechanisms have been incorporated into housing programmes, they are usually treated as bureaucratic procedures, as checklists of tasks that should be performed with the community, but rarely with wider implications. The introduction of mechanisms of participation and other changes in the policies have been a consequence of understanding that the programmes and instruments need to become more complex in order to deal with new challenges. This highlights what was different with Piñera's government, in which the rhetoric was based on the importance of simplifying mechanisms. Authorities

from Bachelet's government were explicit during the interviews about the importance of acknowledging the need for complexity: "the current housing development in Chile requires complexity, not simplification".

Participation, however, is understood as limited to certain kind of activities such as public consultations, training sessions or the presentation of housing design. Somehow, the ways in which the programmes understand participation, housing and process, have prevented them for being truly transformative in terms of increasing socio-political organisation and tackling political inequalities. However, some other instances, such as the creation of housing committees, the processes of saving, or the presence of government officials in the territory, have wider effects in terms of collective organisation and transformative practices, even though they are not officially labelled under the idea of 'participation'. The importance and potentials of these collective processes of organisation has been observed and highlighted in experiences in other countries (see Boonyabancha, 2009).

7.3.2 Political inequalities: Territorial analysis

a. Clientelism as a barrier to political transformation

In putting together the information and reflections about political inequalities that emerged from the field research, it became apparent that the dependency on some authorities and political actors, and the role of *dirigentes* and their networks, were topics that had to be considered. Even though the involvement of the population of Chile in formal politics is very low and voter turnout has decreased, and even though the participation in voluntary associations has decreased by almost half in the last 13 years in Santiago (Herrmann and van Klaveren, 2016), politicians, political parties, and political events appeared over and over again as key to understanding the dynamics in BdM.

How and why is this possible? It seems that in BdM we find what Auyero (2001) has called "poor people's politics", a reference to what we usually called clientelism. Stokes et al. (2013) make the distinction between programmatic and non-programmatic politics, clientelism being a form of the latter. As defined by Arriagada:

> Clientelism can be understood in general terms as a manifestation of social capital (Durston 2005), as a permanent exchange of material and symbolic goods, producing benefits that support a relationship of solidarity (Bourdieu, 2000). Different to other forms of social capital, clientelism is based on a hierarchical and vertical relationship, shaped by the presence of asymmetric transactions (Rehren, 2000): those who control more resources distribute goods and provide services to subjects with less resources and status, in exchange for loyalty and political support. It is, at the same time, a paradoxical relationship, as it implies reciprocity and personal will, but also involves exploitation and domination (Arriagada, 2013).

Clientelism is based in the existence of *patrons* (authorities), *clients* (citizens) and *brokers*, who mediate this relationship. Brokers can take different forms, *dirigentes* being one of them. *Dirigentes* play a key role in building, articulating and reproducing informal networks that allow traditional political structures to be active in territories (Arriagada, 2013). In a sense, clientelism works in opposition to bureaucracy, as a problem-solving network available to residents (Auyero, 2001) which provides answers and manages individual and collective administrative procedures in Municipalities, public offices or directly with authorities. In a sense, the line between social and political work performed by *dirigentes* is just a discursive distinction, as both aspects are completely blended in their community work (Arriagada, 2013).

There is a series of paradoxical elements in relationships based on clientelism. Firstly, they can be defined as asymmetric, but also as mutual interest relationships in which there is a decision from each of the parties to participate:

> [I]nterest is the driving force behind much of the support that political patrons and brokers obtain from their ''clients.'' In contexts of extreme material deprivation (…) clients are not blind followers, dupes in the grip of clientelist politics: their support is calculated, a way to improve their lot by aligning themselves with the brokers and patrons who have the most to offer (Auyero, 2001:11).

But the mutual interest does not mean that there is just a simple exchange relationship, as it is based on asymmetric and vertical associations, particularly in contexts of material precariousness such as those found in BdM, in which there are usually no other ways to

get responses or solutions to a series of issues. The benefits obtained by *clients* are paid usually with loyalty and political support: "loyalty depends on the degree of asymmetry in which the relationship takes place. In simple terms: the larger the favour is, the larger the debt will be, and therefore the larger the possibility of establishing relationships of domination" (Arriagada, 2013).

The second reason why these are paradoxical relationships is that even though they may be based on mutual interest or domination, they are also based on affective and emotional ties:

> Clientelism is an uneven form of 'instrumental friendship', which emerges when one of the partners clearly has a larger capacity for mobilising goods and services, in exchange for loyalty, information and political support. Affection, as in any reciprocal relationship, is then necessary: and 'if it doesn't exist, it must be feigned' (Durston, 2005:4).

Javier Auyero, who has extensively studied clientelism in Latin America and particularly in Argentina, reflects on how relationships of clientelism are based on much more complex bonds than mutual interest and exchange. These informal networks of support are also based on *shared cultural representations,* as political loyalty is a form of identity building. So the political mediation performed by brokers such as *dirigentes* is "a *structured* and *structuring* process, a cluster of relationships with its own rules, its own things to say and not to say, its own trajectories, all giving birth to particular performances, identities, and memories" (Auyero, 2001:214).

In BdM, the effects on the territory of these networks take various forms. On the one hand, there is an undeniable role played by *dirigentes* and their networks, who act as bridges to or even replacements for the public sector, providing answers to residents who would otherwise remain outside the fabric of official assistance in many different fields, as discussed and described in Chapter 5. But on the other hand, the networks of support and clientelism have consequences for the kind of political decisions in the territory, captured by motivations and disputes that emerge from outside of it, which are very difficult to contest from local organisations. They model a political community in which conflicts are based on differences of affiliation or loyalty towards authorities, rather than

programmatic or ideological disagreements. This relates directly to political inequalities, as the kind of social structure based on assistance and precariousness shapes a community in which most decisions are in the hands of those who have the information and networks, and where power is hard to redistribute. Some of the consequences of the networks of clientelism that operate in BdM at different levels are high levels of dependency, lack of autonomy in decision-making, difficulty in generating real participatory processes, and sometimes violent conflicts.

The construction of Jesús de Nazaret (as well as previous interventions in El Volcán) was not exempt from these dynamics. Authorities (mayors, deputies, senators) were constantly mentioned as key players in the process, and many *dirigentes* and residents describe a general feeling of gratitude to some of them. This gratitude was sometimes addressed by residents to the *dirigentes* and, through them, to sympathetic authorities. Additionally, regarding the whole process of movement from El Volcán, some interviewees made reference to very complex and even corrupt dynamics related to the ownership of the flats, rental businesses, and hidden agreements behind the decision making different actors.

Also, the fact that this is a politically contested territory strengthened the historical rivalries between the Municipality and SERVIU, managed by opposing political parties at the time of the construction of Jesús de Nazaret. In community meetings related to the project, the *competition* between both institutions was very clear, as different officials and residents would refer repeatedly to their gratitude to different authorities, reinforcing the idea of *ownership* of the project by either the municipality (and the mayor and its coalition) or the SERVIU (and the central government and its coalition).

But if this was explicit and relevant in the case of Jesús de Nazaret, these dynamics become much more dramatic for the implementation of the Second Opportunity in Francisco Coloane and Cerro Morado. This translates into at least two dynamics discussed below. Firstly, as a politically contested territory, there was extraordinary pressure to deliver results in the short term, and secondly, these networks of clientelism

were exacerbated by the programme, strengthening tensions and differences, and even triggering violence.

As BdM attracted a lot of media attention, the recently elected government of the right-wing president Sebastián Piñera, aligned with the local senator and mayor from the same coalition, saw in the Second Opportunity a chance to execute a distinctive policy. As one of the professionals working in the programme said, "they thought that the way to take care of the problems of Social Condos was to demolish all of them, that means more than 55,000 houses with more than 1,000,000 inhabitants all over the country… so how do you demolish everything?"

The decision was to start with some pilots, but contrary to the initial proposals that incorporated a diagnosis and master-plan, the implementations had to adjust to the 'political times', and therefore there was no space for an engagement process that would have allowed the community to engage with a long-term perspective. This was acknowledged by government officials: "a huge complexity cannot be addressed with this kind of short-term solution, it is not that easy (…) but if the authority said 'we must demolish in two weeks', we had to push for that".

As the demolitions became the only publicly promoted solution for the existing housing stock, and as it gathered public and media attention, this also triggered in BdM processes of uncertainty and confusion, strengthened by the lack of official information and the short timeframes. Some residents would arrive at the SERVIU distressed: "Is it true that they are demolishing everything?"; "Why are you demolishing if I am doing well?"; "We also want the demolitions in my neighbourhood!"; etc.

On top of the political pressure coming from the national level, the territory had internal networks and interests that reinforced political contestations and clientelism. The *we-have-to-demolish-BdM* mantra was adopted by a series of *dirigentes*, mainly linked to a coalition of the mayor and senator for the area, who regarded the programme as a quasi-personal commitment. The identification of some *dirigentes* with the demolition agenda at the personal level had very important consequences for the implementation of the

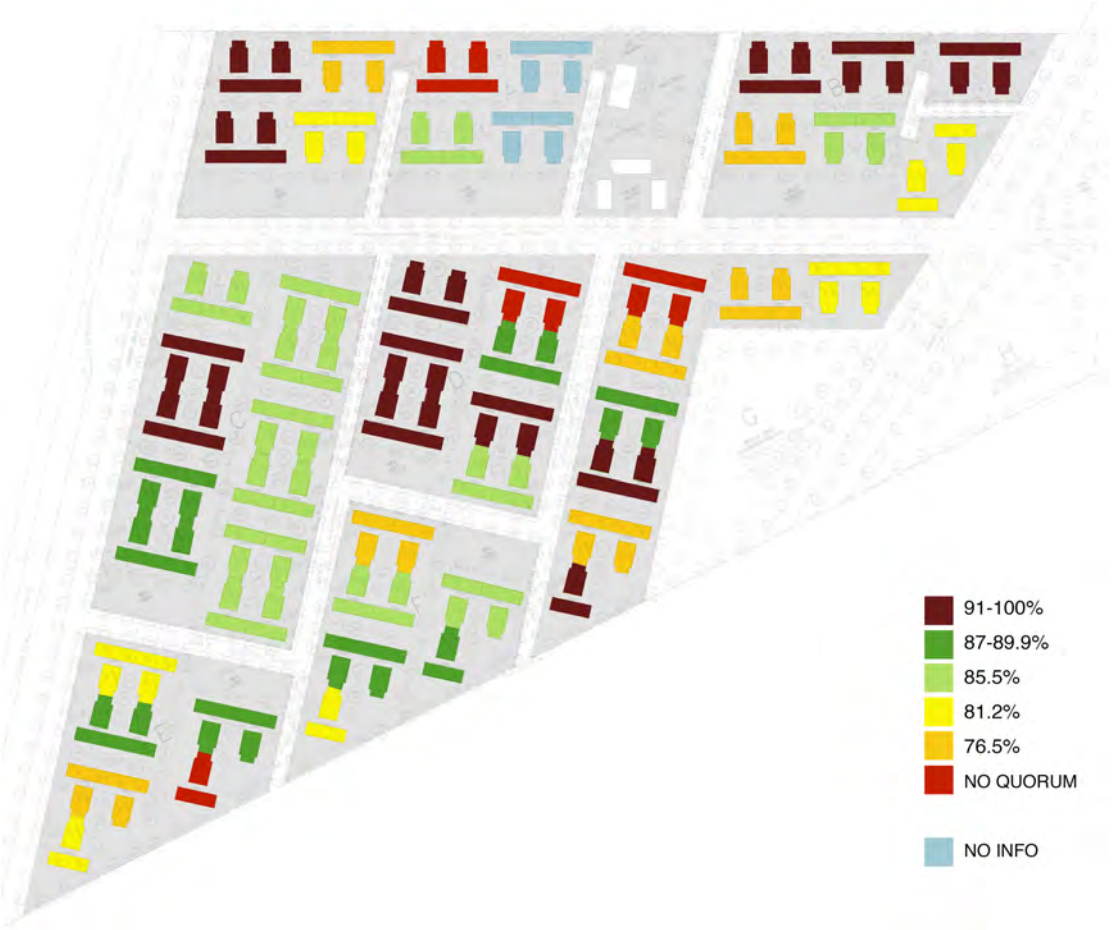
programme. As the voluntary implementation was led by them, the information that people were given was 'we have to leave in any case', not giving real room for disagreement, or opening discussion and conflict resolution between different voices, but rather imposing just one possible way forward.

This situation was deepened by the fact that the programme required 95% acceptance in each block in order to proceed[43], and this ended up putting a lot of pressure on those who did not want to leave their houses. According to government officials and residents, this even triggered episodes of physical violence against the properties, and intimidation against those who were 'against the demolitions'. There were 'sides' in the territory ("war in the blocks", as one interviewee said) very clearly identified, but in which one of the *sides* had all the power to extort the other. The problematic 'voluntary' condition of the programme has been discussed in previous research conducted in the BdM area (Castillo, 2014). As Figure 7.18 shows, in Francisco Coloane the percentage of acceptance to the programme varied enormously from one block to the other, and in the end 13 blocks were selected for demolition, and, at the other extreme, five blocks had total resistance to the programme. As portrayed by Castillo (2014), calling it 'resistance' is actually ambivalent, as the programme was supposed to be voluntary. As a resident explains: "I don't know why they call us resistant, if the President said that this programme was voluntary… what he didn't say is that if you didn't join the programme, you were harming your neighbour, friend or relatives… So, those of us who don't want to leave become enemies of those who want to leave" (Castillo, 2014:2).

All formal communications from the authority were addressed to the *dirigentes*, and this had very problematic results for the participatory component of the programme. In the words of one of the professionals involved in the programme: "you have the whole policy structure just talking to three or four *dirigentas* that are extremely influential in their communities, in which there is a lack of organisational capacities. And that is very problematic, because you are not talking to the residents and families, but to *dirigentes* that end up manipulating some of the information".

[43] Exceptionally, some cases would accept 85% of adherence, being a "conditioned application" (MINVU, 2013b).

Figure 7.18 | Percentages of adherence to the programme per block in Francisco Coloane



Source: Author, based on information provided by SERVIU and Castillo (2014)

The *dirigentes* got involved not just in the decisions of some of the families, but also in the role of brokers in various ways during the implementation of the programme. Some of the residents would say: "they are known because they bring groceries, and they were even choosing the new houses for people, helping with the paperwork for the sellers". During the first call of the Second Opportunity, because of the lack of information, many residents would make decisions thinking that this was the only way to proceed. So the opportunity to increase the capabilities of community members in the process of getting a new house is missed.

One could say that the main reason why this programme actually exists and was applied in BdM is because of clientelist politics. But once again these kinds of networks are, paradoxically, probably also responsible for limiting its impacts in political terms, increasing the pressure to deliver results and constraining the capacity to articulate a

different power structure in the neighbourhoods, fragmenting the already fragile social fabric even more, and diminishing the capacity for creating collective social and political capital that could translate into power.

b. Individual freedom and bureaucracy versus real participation

A second important dynamic identified is the idea that participation is sometimes reduced to a list of procedures and activities, and is also on occasions understood as equivalent to individual freedom.

For Jesús de Nazaret, the community organisation and collective engagement exceeded by far the formal instances of participation included in the DS49 procedurals. This is due to the long history of creation and consolidation of housing committees in El Volcán and other neighbourhoods where Jesús de Nazaret residents came from, which included a process of saving money, of legal constitution, of negotiations with the SERVIU and land owners, and of discussions among the residents. Most of this process was led by *dirigentes,* who worked for years in coordination with various actors to get new houses. This process of collective organisation certainly enriched their capacity as a political community, and this is reflected in the scope of their achievements, and also in the way *dirigentes* and residents envision the process.

It is, however, important not to romanticise the process, but rather to recognise a few elements that diminished its political effects. One is that those visions of the *dirigentes* are still very much attached to the clientelist networks described above. *Dirigentes* will refer to them constantly as the only problem-solving path: "I need to call the mayor to see if they can install the bins in the main street soon"; or "I will ask him to have traffic lights at the intersection with the main road". And secondly, the official processes of participatory design did not really transfer decision-making power to the residents. This is partly due to the context of extreme precariousness in which the residents lived prior to coming to Jesús de Nazaret, which made any proposal, by contrast, seem wonderful. As one *dirigenta* describes:

> When they showed us the model of the houses, we were all happy with it, and didn't have any concerns. Because we saw *a house*, and compared with our flats…

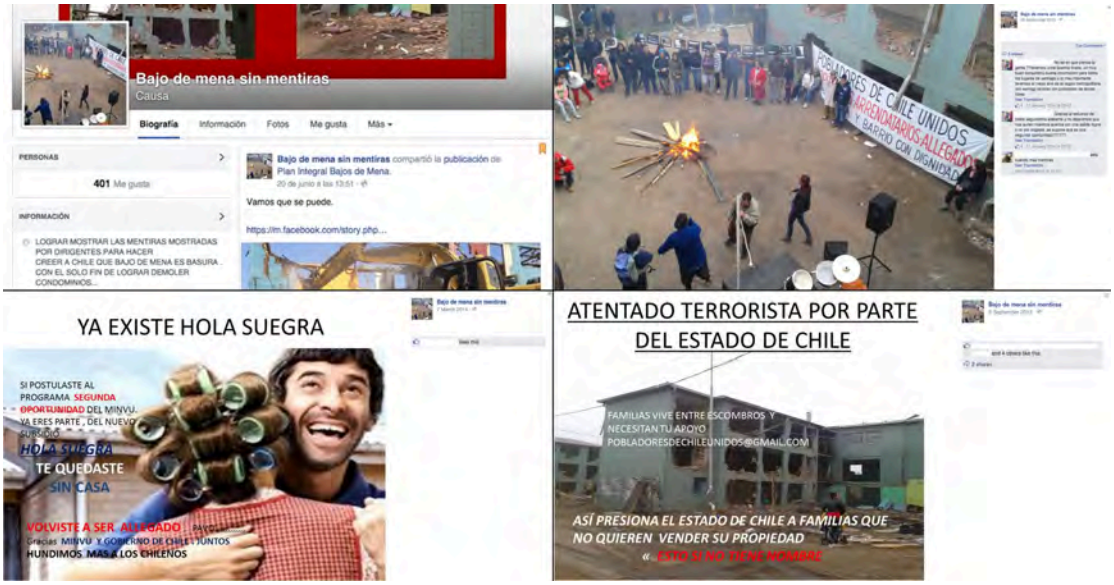
> it was unbelievable! They showed us the model and we didn't need more. Then we went to see the land, and then they showed us the show-house… and when we saw it we couldn't be happier. After that we were all anxious to move here.

The case of the Second Opportunity, once again, is more problematic. In this programme, *participation* was mainly understood as the exercise of individual freedoms, and *organisation* as the coordination of those individuals willing to take part rather than the construction of a collective project.

A proof of the latter is the fact that only those households who decided to join the demolition policy, and not those who decided to stay, were regarded as the beneficiaries of the programme. Residents who did not want to be part of the Second Opportunity, and who remained living in the area next to the demolition sites were not considered part of the programme and therefore they were outside the scope of its implementation. The consequences of this were diverse. On the one hand, this left them outside of any kind of formal dialogue with authorities, and the lack of formal organisation prevented them from finding spaces to discuss alternative collective solutions. Additionally, as they were not part of the beneficiaries group, the programme was not fully accountable for the consequences in the territory after the actual beneficiaries left. Despite this lack of formal dialogue, there were some alternative organisations that *resisted* the programme, confronted the promises made by authorities about improvements to the neighbourhoods, and appealed for the right of stay in the neighbourhood (see examples in Figure 7.19). However, it was very hard for these fragile and marginal organisations to find a proper space in which to exercise political pressure, as most channels were *owned* by the networks already described.

Another consequence of this understanding of individual freedom as a core pillar of the programme, is that it makes the voucher the main instrument of operation. Actually, the way in which some authorities approached the programme was by saying that "the programme would return dignity to families by assigning them a new subsidy". This has various implications.

Figure 7.19 | Screenshots of Facebook group news: "Bajos de Mena without lies"



Source: Facebook

First, the use of the voucher to appeal to the individual freedom of households implied that the programme did not influence the destination of the families, or any legal instruments to look after them. As was discussed in Chapter 6, 76% of the beneficiaries who received subsidies stayed in Puente Alto, and 60% of them stayed in BdM. This is a relevant piece of information, as it shows that a significant proportion of the households decided to move within the territory, and therefore it would have been valuable to have approached housing solutions – and indeed the whole process – from a more collective standpoint. As one of the interviewees said: "there was no planning in the search for housing, no commitment from the state to say 'look, these are the alternatives'". Even if many people stayed in the area because of the existence of social networks, there was an idyllic vision of the 'new house' that started to spread in the communities as an individual desire, rather than thinking of the kind of collective solutions that could be designed.

A second consequence of the voucher approach and the understanding of participation as individual freedom, is that it created a new market in the area that, as discussed in previous sections, implied processes of speculation that could end up in forced expulsion of residents who, as part of the programme, wanted to buy a property in the same area.

The mantra of 'the more flexible, the better' was used to reinforce the 'individual freedom' approach by the programme defenders, refering mainly to a few exceptional successful cases that moved, for instance, to a rural house or a new town. Understanding that flexibility is key, and that it is very important to give space for households to have free choice, the problem arises because individual freedom is regarded as synonymous with participation, precluding any possibility of collective organisation and action. Yet collective organisation and action are both necessary components for communities to be able to negotiate and have control over their affairs.

c. The scale of housing policies: From individual and static units to citywide processes

The third component, which probably touches most of the aspects that have been discussed in this and other sections of this chapter, is the question of the scale of housing policy, and the challenges about moving from an understanding of housing as individual static units, to the idea of housing as the result of a series of citywide processes. It is very difficult for a housing programme to trigger deep social organisation and transformation towards redistribution of power if it is attached to an understanding of housing as static units (reducing the problem to voucher assignation), rather than as a dynamic process with citywide consequences.

Jesús de Nazaret is an example of a neighbourhood that was built as a result of a very complex process and multiple trajectories that came together. One of the main successes of Jesús de Nazaret is that it was able to build a common solution for groups of people who worked in coordination for years looking for a *vivienda digna,* some of them from El Volcán and other neighbourhoods, some even having moved previously from an informal settlement to El Volcán. It represented a history of collective struggles that found a collective solution. Of course some people were left behind, as one *dirigenta* describes: "we actually selected the people. Those who moved here from El Volcán are all working people – honest, quiet, clean people".

Even if the notion of process is key to understanding Jesús de Nazaret, the scale of it is still very limited. As discussed, housing provided through the DS49 is still understood

mainly in terms of individual units, and the kind of city that it builds remains functionally and socially homogenous, without delivering new infrastructure or challenging the current exclusion of the BdM area from the rest of the city.

In the case of the Second Opportunity, it is important to highlight that most interviewees mentioned that prior to its implementation the programme had been conceived as an urban policy, with aspects of diagnosis and master planning, and working at different scales with more complex approaches to housing issues. But the political timing and the lack of appropriate legal instruments ended up reducing its scope. Actually it is not a coincidence that within the structure of the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism the programme was hosted by '*Barrios'*, the division in charge of public spaces and neighbourhood recovery. But as most of the interviewees acknowledged, the programme failed at this scale, and in the end it was basically a tool of subsidy (given for a second time to some families under some circumstances), rather than a public policy for urban regeneration. Many factors contributed to this: divisions within the organisation of the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism, lack of political will, the divisions in the territory, and the necessity of delivering short-term results.

Aspects of urban integration, connectivity, security, access to public services, public space, collectively owned areas, political organisation, and urban regeneration in general were completely overlooked by the programme, and this restricted its action to the provision of 'housing solutions' crystallised in a voucher. Even the selection of the neighbourhoods within BdM lacked an urban perspective, as someone pointed out that Cerro Morado did not have major problems compared with other areas. Some of the interviewees said: "we are trying to resolve complex problems with partial solutions"; "in Chile we still haven't learnt that the transformation of a territory implies long term actions… we cannot pretend to resolve in four years all the problems of a territory that took us more than 24 years to build". This is not just a problem of the scale of action, but is evidence of the absence of the idea of process behind housing solutions.

Scale has come out strongly as an issue in the institutional evaluation of the programme after the first call, and some efforts of the Ministry have been pointing in that direction.

However, any new attempts at urban intervention cannot be successful in dealing with the complexity and scale of urban problems if they do not reflect a new understanding of housing. It is not just about the geographical scale or size of the interventions, but about changing the approach to the multiplicity of aspects that the housing project should contemplate in order to tackle multiples inequalities, including processes to address political inequalities.

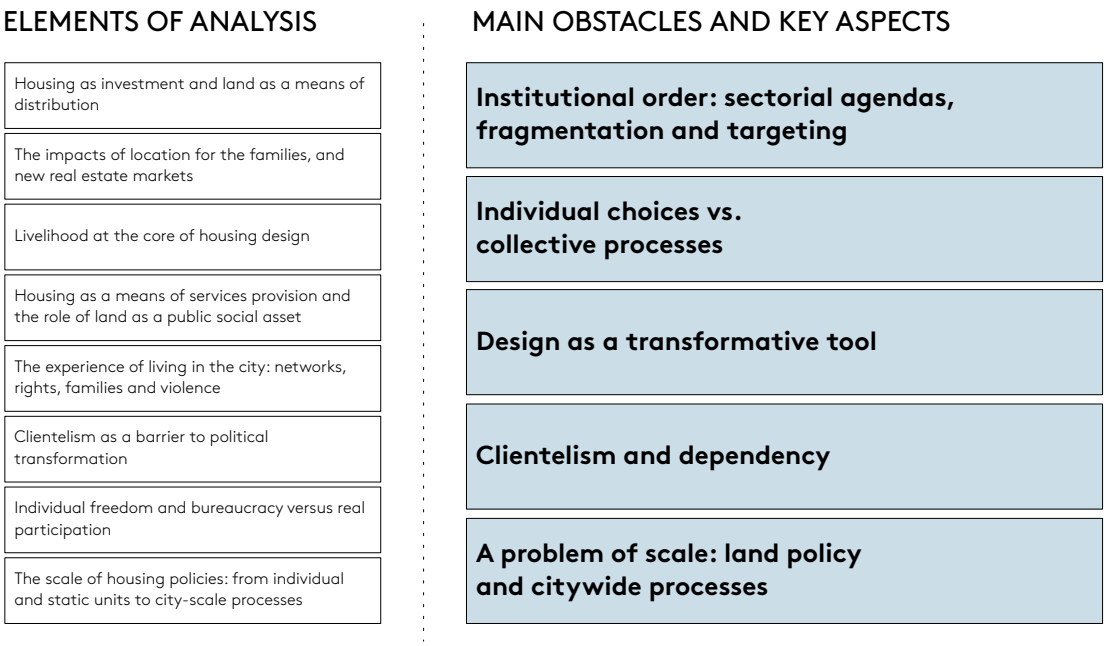
7.4 Towards housing as urbanism: Identifying the cracks

This chapter has so far reviewed the main issues in relation to the impact on economic, social and political inequalities observed in both programmes. As many of the elements identified are based on common trends, this section presents a summary of the main elements observed in the three dimensions, as a way to identify the key obstacles that the policies have faced. As Patsy Healey reflects:

> To move beyond a feeling that 'something needs to be done' to getting support for an organisational effort, there needs to be a 'moment of opportunity', a 'crack' in the power relations, a situation of contradiction and conflict, which encourages people to recognize that they need to reflect on what they are doing, that they need to work with different people, that they need to evolve different processes (Healey, 2006:269-270).

This section seeks to summarise those cracks, those spaces that are seen as opportunities to build new social arrangements because they have either reinforced or hindered the task of reducing urban inequalities. These elements are summarised in Figure 7.20 and explored further hereinafter: (1) institutional order, sectoral agendas, fragmentation and targeting; (2) individual choices vs. collective processes; (3) clientelism and dependency; (4) design as a transformative tool; and (5) the problem of scale: land policy and citywide processes. Even through these five elements might have different characteristics and consequences, they are interconnected and must be understood and addressed from a systemic point of view.

Figure 7.20 | Common element: key aspect and obstacle in facing inequalities



Source: Author

7.4.1. Institutional order: Sectoral agendas, fragmentation and targeting

Housing policies and their scope are determined in part by the institutional order behind them, reflecting the strengths and weaknesses of the state apparatus and its institutions. For tackling economic, social and political inequalities, there seem to be common challenges related to the way in which institutions work. A first challenge relates to the sectoral structure of the state, in which different ministries, departments or even divisions within the same institution struggle to work together and to find spaces for collaboration. This directly affects the capacity of housing to act at multiple dimensions, as its production is usually constrained by the scope and instruments of an institution whose main concern is to provide subsidies and incentives, and which struggles to generate dialogue with other sectors such as the ministries of health, education, transport or labour. This therefore limits the scope of housing policies to address inequalities.

Secondly, and related to the first challenge, there are issues of fragmentation and disconnection between different procedures. This is particularly problematic regarding the miscommunication and differences of expectation between officials who work in

central offices and those who are on the ground in the territory. This disconnection also reflects the serious problems of centralisation in the country. While most of the narratives from central government include aspects of equality, sustainable economic development, social integration, participation and so on, the kind of problems and challenges faced by government officials actually applying the programmes are very disconnected from this long-term vision. They usually find themselves dealing with practical problems in order to achieve quantitative goals and procedural mechanisms.

And thirdly, the Chilean state uses targeting as a central principle of policy design, which creates in many cases a perverse process of segregation through the development of services 'for the poor' and 'for the rich' as two separate systems. Since targeting policies are typically created to tackle the problem of poverty and not inequality, there are no programmes pursuing such an end (Atria, 2011). Over time, targeted welfare tends to become less egalitarian because it commands less political support than universal principles. This translates into an absence of a universalist perspective in urban policies in general (Cociña, 2018), which hinders the capacity of the policies to pursue integrative actions, beyond *the city of the poor* and its limits.

Even if all these institutional aspects have hindered the task of reducing urban inequalities, they are usually recognised by authorities and practitioners as a pitfall that needs revision, and that recognition of the exhaustion of a long-standing order constitutes a crack for possible transformation.

7.4.2. Individual choices vs. collective processes

Another important issue is the tension between individual choices and collective processes. A policy based on the provision of subsidies and which fosters individual choice as a way of exercising freedom makes it difficult to enlarge collective processes, which are the basis of increasing the productive capacities of territories, reinforcing the role of public goods and fostering the collective political capacities of communities.

Additionally, strengthening the idea of individuals as autonomous actors that exercise their freedom through individual choices reinforces fake dichotomies about the reality in

the territory. This is particularly true in relation to the existence of complex networks of collaboration, assistance, friendship, dispute and mutual respect, within both legal and illicit organisations. These implicit or explicit agreements of mutual respect are founded on a fabric of common history, kinship, and complicity, even between residents with deep political disagreement (Han, 2012), and are very different from the simplistic and polarised understanding of good/bad, victims/victimisers. The reinforcement of individual choices as the only mechanism for exercising freedom neglects a complex social context, precluding or at least hindering the process of facing collective problems through understanding the social assets in the territory.

It is, however, interesting to find that there are areas within existing policies that promote collective organisation, particularly regarding the process of long-term struggle and negotiations. In that sense, and considering the rich history of collective housing production in Chile, there is an enormous space for increasing the collective nature of the housing policies. To do so, however, it would be necessary to challenge the individual subsidy logic, which is so embedded in the different housing programmes studied.

7.4.3. Clientelism and dependency

As has been discussed, networks of assistance play a key role in providing social and economic support in the territories. This research has found, however, that these networks and their clientelist logic can have much deeper effects in the kind of political community built in the territory, and the capacity of the community to determine its own fate.

Segregation and the spatial concentration of the urban poor have been widely studied in Chile in terms of their effects on increasing vulnerability and diminishing opportunities. This aspect, however, has been relatively absent from the urban debate. The concentration of poverty and the precariousness at various levels that this concentration breeds and reproduces, create the perfect scenario to cradle the *poor people's politics* referred by Auyero (2001). It is the urban form and the territorial logics, the shortcomings and multiple vulnerabilities that allow these hierarchical logics of dependency to flourish and perpetuate.

There are many paradoxical aspects of this phenomenon. Besides those paradoxical dimensions discussed previously, related to the tensions between *mutual interest* and *domination*, and the paradox between *exchange*- and *affection*-based relationships, there are other ambivalent aspects. Particularly in BdM, it is precisely the presence of this notion of *ownership* from the authorities that increases public attention and investment in the area. As has been discussed, the BdM area is somehow exceptional because of its scale and location, but the reality lived there is not very different from that experienced in other peripheral areas of Santiago and in other Chilean cities. Compared with them, however, BdM receives an impressive amount of attention from politicians and therefore the media, and this attention also brings investment. The paradox appears because the same clientelist networks behind the arrival of investment and attention in the territory are those that prevent the interventions in the territory from being truly transformative, preventing them from generating genuine citizen involvement in which disagreements appear and are resolved in a democratic way. On the contrary, the interventions have even triggered violent conflicts.

Another condition of these clientelist networks is that, as they have been fed by the concentration of poverty and necessities in clearly delimited territories, they bring about solutions to problem but seldom attack the roots of this concentration. So the construction and intervention of housing is restricted to providing solutions to specific needs, but authorities are unlikely to find incentives to look for solutions to wider problems and multiple aspects of the urban problems, to contest the spatial, economic and social relationships in which housing production is based, or to build active political communities able to challenge these networks and their nature.

7.4.4. Design as a transformative tool

An element that was more or less explicit in most of the analysis and that seems cross-cutting to all challenges, is the idea that architectural and urban design could be used as a transformative tool. In that sense, it appeared as a recurrent question of how architecture could contribute in looking for solutions that strengthen local livelihoods and the productive nature of territories, increasing the access to services and increasing the

chances of flourishing social development, dealing with the challenges of inhabiting dense urban areas, and strengthening the collective political capacities of communities. Both urbanism and architectural design as disciplines have the potential to address the inequalities discussed, but they don't necessarily do so innately, and therefore there is a need to put them in conversation with the different topics debated so far. Referring to the role of design in the ambitions of urbanism as a tool for inclusive development, Fiori and Brandão point out:

> Such ambitions cannot be the result of good design practices alone. These practices are inexorably and complexly interwoven with the social and political processes of the city (…) Good design and urbanism can help create platforms for other social and political developments in the city. It will not, however, automatically create inclusive and just cities. But neither will just cities come about without appropriate spatial and design strategies (2010:192).

In practice, both the DS49 and the Second Opportunity have an important deficit in terms of design. There are probably two phenomena that explain better how and why design has been absent as a transformative tool in these programmes. One is related to the over-financialisation of housing policies that was acknowledged many times during the interviews. For example, according to Alfredo Rodriguez "when a policy is just about financing vouchers, there is no policy" (Rodriguez, 2014). Equally, Hernán Ortega from the BdM Integral Plan reflects:

> I would say that this has been a subsidy to poverty, rather than a housing solution. A subsidy to poverty that allows the provision of a roof and a shelter, but solves neither the housing problems nor people's quality of life (…) The privatisation of solutions has led us to have more than 15,000 paper-solutions, subsidies for reconstruction, for buying houses, for which the market doesn't offer any supply. When you privatise the supply, the value of houses depends on the market, and any increase in the subsidies is then absorbed by the market, and it is never enough (Ortega, 2014).

The excessive focus on the provision of subsidies in both the programmes researched has direct consequences in the area of design: for the DS49 this meant that the design of houses was dictated by standardised solutions, and for the Second Opportunity the room for urban design was non-existent, as the programme consisted just of the provision of vouchers.

The second phenomenon relates to that fact that a culture of design is completely absent from the SERVIU. Contrary to historical institutions such as the CORVI and CORMU during the 1960s and 1970s, whose projects had a clear identity dominated by modernist architecture, the SERVIU has not built its own design identity over the years. In practice, the only architectural label that it carries is a negative one that emerged from the infamous blocks of Social Condos built by this institution for more than two decades. While in the rest of Latin America some "vibrancy of architectural practices" (Hernández, 2010b) can be found in the design of infrastructure and public space, clearly observed in internationally recognised cases such as the city of Medellin, in Chile the design question is relatively absent from the massive production of urban space and public architecture (Cociña et al., 2010). So social housing has been associated with invisible designers. Even though Chilean architecture seems to be passing through an impressive period on the international scene, and even if part of this recognition is associated with social housing due to the exposition of the Pritzker awarded Alejandro Aravena, massive production of housing is still designed by incognito architects hidden behind standardised solutions (Cociña and Valenzuela, 2007). And the cases studied in BdM do not escape from this logic, posing pressing challenges in relation to the role of design in proposing alternatives in the context of overcrowded and highly dense environments.

Returning to design questions is key not just for a disciplinary reason. It is about using design as a tool for finding solutions to complex problems, particularly related to access to land, increased density, and the design of spaces able to embrace social and political complexities.

7.4.5. A problem of scale: Land policy and citywide processes

The final issue that has been highlighted as a common feature in both cases and for each of the dimensions studied, is the question about the scale of housing policies, their relationship to land policies and to citywide processes. This is an issue that was central in defining the framework of analysis and the understanding of *housing as urbanism,* and therefore has been a key aspect in the analysis.

In general terms, the voucher, sectoral and targeting logics, the institutional fragmentation and the lack of more complex instruments are important barriers in addressing issues at different scales. Also the perception that there is an urgent need to attend to short-term and concrete matters, frequently precludes authorities, policy makers and government officials from addressing questions that physically exceed the size of the housing plot or neighbourhood, and have a longer duration than the period of design, construction and installation of new houses.

However, there are some interesting discussions and concrete attempts to work in the direction of expanding the scope of urban policies, and particularly the capacity of the state for acting and taking care of more complex issues such as inequalities. Some of these were discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, for example: the inclusion of *social enabling plans* for housing construction since the early 2000s; the incorporation of more complex instruments and subsidies; the inclusion of the notion of neighbourhood and participatory planning through the incorporation of the PQMB; the initial discussions for the implementation of a Land Policy following the new PNDU, seeking to increase the capacity of the state to intervene in the use of land for social purposes; and the development of intermediate scales of action such as the *vulnerable territories* in BdM, and the implementation of programmes at that scale such as the *Emblematic Neighbourhood* definition and the *Integral Plan.*

For the programmes studied, however, it seems that most of these logics are still absent, and there are enormous challenges in incorporating them. There is the need to change the scale of action and to understand housing and the city as two parts of an indivisible problem. The next chapter will discuss in detail some programmes that, even though they do not work directly with housing, are addressing some of these challenges more directly, which is indispensable to scaling up the impacts of housing policies and tackling inequalities.

Final comments: Looking for a change of perspective

This chapter has presented an analysis of the implementation of the DS49 and the Second Opportunity in Jesús de Nazaret and Cerro Morado/Francisco Coloane

respectively. It has used the lenses proposed in relation to the role of housing in reducing economic, social and political inequalities, and has discussed each of the dimensions from an institutional and territorial perspective.

The variety of topics that emerged in each of the dimensions speaks about a territory and interventions that are complex in many respects. Any attempt at oversimplification would fail to give account of the fabric that supports inequalities. The final section has, nevertheless, attempted to find some common elements and obstacles that are common to most of the dimensions studied, and that gather together what this research had found to be the five key aspects observed: the institutional order, based on sectoral and targeting logics, and highly fragmented within and among institutions, and between central offices and the ground; the logic of individual choices as a central value, crystallised in the individual subsidy system, and the importance of enlarging collective processes of value creation; networks of clientelism and dependency that are at the core of the interdependent relationships, and which play an important role in the collective decision making in the territory; the absence of urban design questions, and the potential they could have in finding comprehensive solutions for the multiple problems discussed; and finally the problem of scale of housing policies, and their relationship to land policies and to citywide processes.

Identifying these common elements and obstacles is key for envisioning future policies, as is understanding the particularity of the cases researched from a wider perspective, beyond the borders of this particular territory. Identifying the common elements enables us to recognise where the cracks, the aspects that, because they are either reinforcing or hindering the task of reducing urban inequalities, are seen as opportunities to change how things are. Together, these five elements express the need for a change of perspective, in which housing policies are understood beyond housing units. As will be discussed in the next chapter, some of the answers to these challenges might be found in urban policies that, without considering housing at their core, are dealing with some of the gaps identified here as crucial to scale up the impacts of housing production.

CHAPTER 8

Looking for Keys to more Comprehensive Housing Policies: Programa Quiero Mi Barrio and Plan Integral in BdM

Introduction

While I was undertaking the fieldwork someone asked me if I could write a short piece about the most recent and positive experiences of urban interventions in BdM, to share with a wider audience 'what is going on there', to show that 'there are things happening' in BdM. I struggled to try to put something together – it was not easy – but one idea kept coming into my mind over and over again: when we refer to vulnerable territories, we usually associate that vulnerability with abandonment, with territories that have been neglected or forgotten by the state and by public actors. But the case of BdM seems to be exactly the opposite: rather than being abandoned by the state, this is a territory that on many occasions has been abused and damaged by society. It has been the actions, constructions and interventions of the state that to to a large extent have shaped its fate. So the reason why this person wanted me to share that *there are things happening in BdM* was not because there is novelty in the fact that the state is intervening in that area, but because there is a belief that what the state is doing now should be different. There is a view that current urban policies are dealing with problems that the previous ones did not.

This chapter presents a review of two urban programmes that have intervened in the BdM area in recent years: *Programa Quiero Mi Barrio* (PQMB –*I Love My Neighbourhood* Programme), and the *Plan Integral* of BdM (Integral Plan). As discussed in Chapter 3, these programmes were initially not included as part of the main research for a number of reasons, including the fact that they were not necessarily involved directly in housing provision. However, as a way of capturing the interventions in the territory from a more complete perspective, interviews were conducted with government officials and the

authorities involved in these programmes. While researching these programmes, it became evident that some of the topics and issues that emerged from the analysis of housing policies were addressed in a more comprehensive way by these two programmes, and therefore it was valuable to include them as part of the analysis.

As an economic, social and political device, housing can only achieve its transformative potential and tackle inequalities if it is able to deal with urban issues that at the moment are not part of the scope of traditional housing approaches, as exemplified by the DS49 or the Second Opportunity. So this chapter presents an analysis of these two urban programmes that, rather than being 'background cases' as initially stated, can be seen as indispensable complements to those programmes focused exclusively on housing provision. These urban programmes contain some of the elements that could enable a movement towards an understanding of housing policies beyond the delivery of individual units, for example dealing with infrastructure, multiple scales, social rights and political processes. Addressing these cases makes it possible to explore institutional efforts to tackle some of the issues presented in the analysis of the previous chapter. Understanding the effects of these programmes at the urban scale can contribute to a wider discussion about housing policies, and to building clearer paths towards opening up alternative futures – realities in which the normative ideals described at the beginning of this thesis can actually take place.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. It first presents a brief description of the programmes and their implementation in BdM. In the case of PQMB the discussion centres on understanding the logics of the programme and the way in which it has come to BdM, both through the regular schemes and with the exceptional *Emblematic Neighbourhood* scheme. Then, the Integral Plan is introduced; this is a planning tool taken from a post-disaster framework specifically applied to BdM, which seeks to test new scales of approach to urban problems. The second part of this chapter uses information derived from field research to unpack how these two programmes are dealing with the five main challenges identified in the previous chapter: (1) institutional order, sectoral agendas, fragmentation and targeting; (2) individual choices vs. collective processes; (3) clientelism and dependency; (4) design as a transformative tool; and (5) the

problem of scale, land policy and citywide processes. The analysis is based mainly on observations in the field and on interviews conducted with government officials and authorities. It does not, therefore, pretend to be an exhaustive analysis but rather a series of reflections about the challenges and opportunities embedded in these programmes.

The relevance of looking at these programmes lies in understanding how they are dealing with new challenges, shedding light on the main issues that urban instruments and institutions are facing. In doing so, we hope to return to questions about inequality and housing, as the transformations that these programmes are addressing include some of the indispensable elements needed to trigger a change of paradigm that can support a more comprehensive approach to housing policies beyond quantitative solutions. These approaches can complement traditional housing policies and can, together, build a foundation upon which to understand housing as urbanism.

8.1 New perspectives for urban interventions: PQMB and Plan Integral in BdM

8.1.1 Description of PQMB

As discussed in Chapter 4, international organisations and local academics have tried in recent decades to bring about important changes in Chilean urban policies, in order to tackle the extreme problems of segregation, urban inequality and qualitative deficit that they have somehow triggered. The clearest manifestation of this change has been the creation of the new Urban Development National Policy (PNDU), and the creation of a committee (CNDU) for its implementation. The translation of the PNDU into actual legal instruments will take some time, and its effects on the urban form will not be seen for several years. However, there had been some specific and concrete attempts to address some of the challenges that the PNDU portrays, even before it was written. Probably the most significant of these attempts was the creation of the *Programa de Recuperación de Barrios* (Neighbourhood Recovery Programme) or *Programa Quiero mi Barrio* (PQMB) in 2006.

Since its creation, what is interesting about the PQMB relates to at least two elements. Firstly, there has to include both physical and social intervention in every neighbourhood, and secondly, the policy has a strong emphasis on processes of participation. So the creation of the PQMB offered a change in the focus of urban interventions, proposing a series of shifts in terms of approach to urban policies: from quantitative housing deficit, to qualitative urban dimensions; from standardised urban answers for homogenous citizens, to urban solutions that capture the diversity of urban experience; from a model focused on the shortcomings of the territory, to a model focused on its potentials and assets; from top-down rationalist planning to a planning process led by citizens through participation; and from centralised to decentralised decision making (MINVU, 2014c:13). The programme was "based on an integral, inter-sectoral focus, including citizen participation in the design and execution of the interventions, approaching social and physical aspects of the projects in equal terms" (Nieto, 2008:140). As described by one government official involved in the programme:

> PQMB seeks to transform the territories through the articulation of the existing social fabric, being aware of the opportunities present in the territory, using the knowledge about the site, and providing resources to activate projects, creating a contract between the state and the community.

The programme has two main components, an urban plan, with projects such as common facilities, public spaces, infrastructure, etc., and a social component, with projects of social intervention and articulation. It also has a communication strategy and a multi-sectoral strategy. It has a series of crosscutting issues, which include participation, cultural heritage and identity, environment and security (MINVU, 2014c). The PQMB works just with collective or public spaces, and so does not intervene in housing. The types of intervention include improvement of public spaces, community centres, public lighting, social events, etc.

The programme started intervening in 200 neighbourhoods in the country during the first government of Michelle Bachelet (2006-2010), and continued during Piñera's government (2010-2014) with 113 neighbourhoods: 106 regarded as vulnerable, two heritage areas, two emblematic and three neighbourhoods of regional interest. Then it was re-launched with another 203 neighbourhoods under the current government of

Bachelet: 200 regular neighbourhoods plus three included after the massive fires in Valparaíso during 2014 (Gobierno de Chile, 2015). The neighbourhoods were selected by central government, based on applications made by the municipalities, which have a key role in managing the teams of professionals working in them, and the dialogue between the territories and central government.

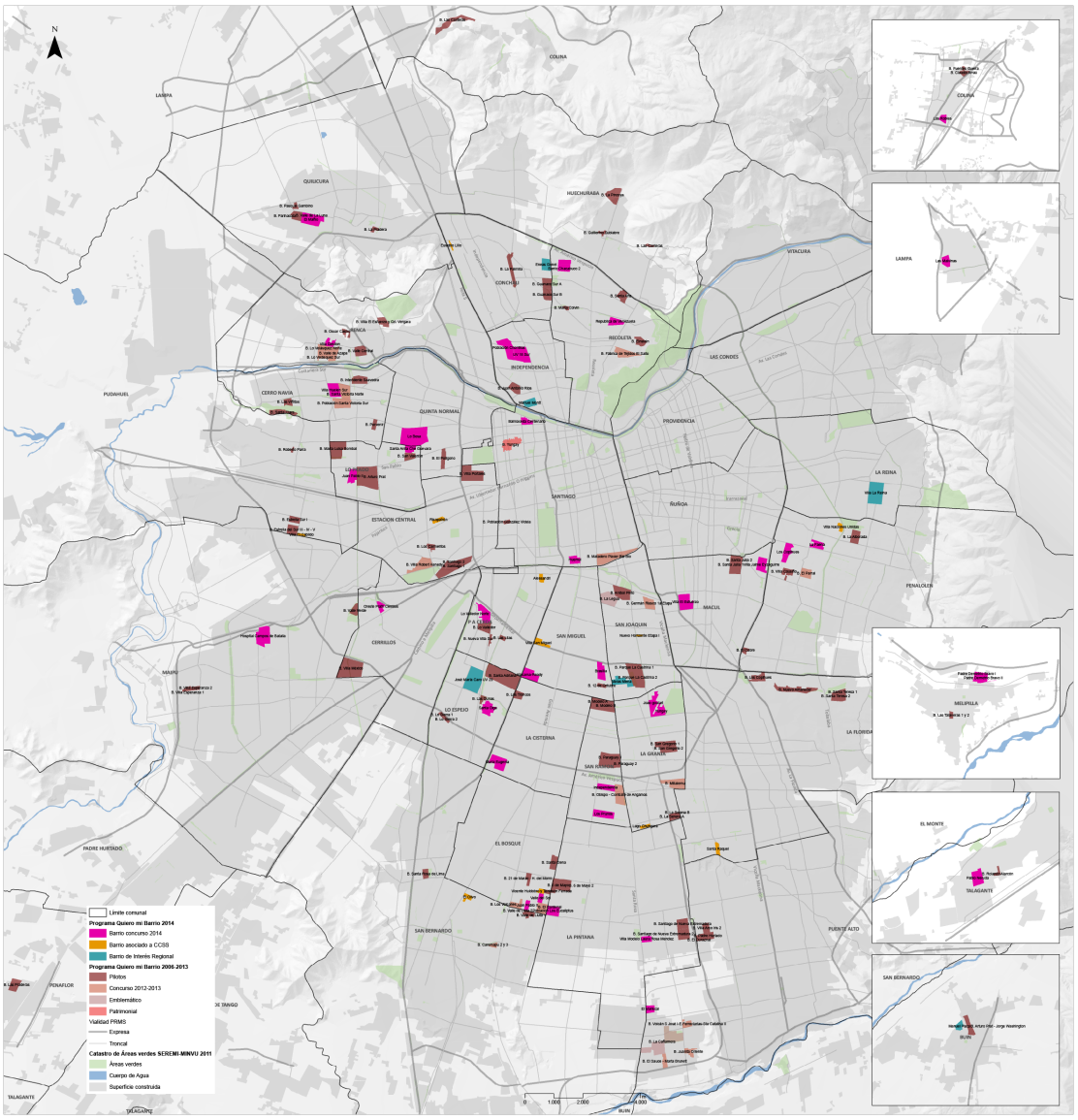
A key component of the PQMB is the participatory aspect. Each neighbourhood needs to create a Neighbourhood Development Committee (CVD – *Consejo Vecinal de Desarrollo*) that arranges all the formal dialogue, represents the community, and monitors the implementation of the programme. The CVD is created specifically for the PQMB, and is not the same as the existing and traditional *Juntas de Vecinos* or Neighbourhood Associations.

As originally designed, the intervention in each neighbourhood was supposed to last for four years, but in reality most of the interventions have taken longer, as each case has its own exceptional conditions. The interventions are divided into four phases: phase one involves diagnosis (6-10 months); phase two involves elaboration of the programme agreement and execution (24-28 months); phase three is closing the programme down (3-4 months); and phase four involves evaluating impacts and results (3-4 months) (MINVU, 2014c). After the diagnosis, the CVD and the PQMB team sign a contract, which contains an agreement about the different work and projects that the programme will carry out in the territory. These projects always include a 'building-trust-intervention' (*obra de confianza*), which is supposed to be a quick, concrete and early project, aimed at building trust with the community.

In 2006 the PQMB defined four kinds of neighbourhoods based on their size and complexity, up to 500 units, up to 1,500, up to 3,000 and over 3,000 respectively (Nieto, 2008). During the first call, 11 neighbourhoods were called 'critical neighbourhoods', because they were either the biggest or most complex. These included Santa Adriana, Villa Portales or Las Viñitas. During Piñera's administration, which started in 2010, a new category called *Emblematic Neighbourhoods* was implemented, that changed the scale and scope of the programme completely by introducing interventions

in territories as big and complex as La Legua and BdM, with around 20,000 and 130,000 inhabitants respectively.

Figure 8.1 | Neighbourhoods under PQMB interventions in Santiago



Source: Information provided by SEREMI Región Metropolitana

The PQMB is an unprecedented programme of urban intervention in Chile that has been able to put on the table a discussion about official participatory processes and urban design, and that has opened the space for an increasing number of professionals from different backgrounds with new expertise in community work and design. In some cases the arrival of PQMB has triggered processes of self-help and community organisation in neighbourhoods (Castillo Couve, 2014). As it is now ten years since its implementation,

however, it is appropriate to discuss somo of its failures and shortcomings, particularly regarding the limited scope of interventions, which are obliged to remain outside housing and the private sphere, and also the approach to participatory processes. Regarding the latter:

> In the PQMB, residents' organisations don't intervene in the selection of the neighbourhoods that take part in the programme. Neither do they have a say in defining the size of the investment. The community, represented in the CVD and accompanied by the programme's professionals, is limited to prioritising the projects and participating in some design sessions (Castillo Couve, 2014:26).

The PQMB arrived at BdM in two different formats: the programme has intervened in specific neighbourhoods through the regular scheme, and BdM was also included as one of the two Emblematic Neighbourhoods in 2013, which involved the whole area of BdM as a single unit. BdM has been declared a *Priority Zone*, defined across the country based on their vulnerability conditions, and the PQMB has to intervene within these zones. The concept of a Priority Zone was introduced by the MINVU following the design of a territorial targeting methodology based on a series of vulnerability indicators (environmental deterioration, social vulnerability and security) that enabled the identification of urban areas and the establishment of an clearly limited intervention areas for the programme.

For the *comuna* of Puente Alto, BdM has been defined as the priority zone, and therefore the applications that the municipality prepares need to be within its limits. Under the regular programme, there are four neighbourhoods with interventions, three of them from the 2013 call, and one included in 2015. The neighbourhoods that the municipality defined for the application were actually bigger areas that incorporated more than one *villa* or neighbourhood each: in 2013, the three areas involved were (1) El Sauce, Marta Brunet and El Almendral; (2) Juanita Oriente and Monseñor Alvear; and (3) El Volcán Son José 1, Estaciones Ferroviarias and Santa Catalina. And in 2015 just one neighbourhood was included, El Mariscal (Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2 | Neighbourhoods under regular PQMB interventions in BdM

Source: Author

For all these neighbourhoods, the 'building-trust-intervention' consisted of the improvement of public lighting and a series of other works (Table 8.1). Despite the idea that all interventions should be defined through participatory methods, municipal officials explained that they defined the building-trust-interventions projects by themselves, in order to ensure that they happened on time. A problem identified by the professionals was the fact that as the unit of intervention was created for the application (a collection of neighbourhoods or *villas* without necessarily a clear connection other than proximity), the management of expectations and coordination in the CVDs was very challenging.

Table 8.1 | List of works and investment in each neighbourhood executed by 2015

Year of execution	Name	Investment
2014	Improvement of public lighting: Volcán San José I	CL$ 17,530,569
2014	Improvement of public lighting: El Sauce	CL$ 18,650,524
2014	Improvement of public lighting: Juanita Oriente	CL$ 22,215,948
Under development by 2015	Improvement of transit spaces: Estaciones Ferroviarias	CL$ 45,304,674
Under development by 2015	Rehabilitation of neighbourhood centre: Volcán San José	CL$ 96,019,420
Under development by 2015	Rehabilitation of neighbourhood centre: Santa Catalina	CL$ 94,666,819
Under development by 2015	Rehabilitation of green area: Santa Catalina	CL$ 55,000,000
Under development by 2015	Rehabilitation of central park: El Sauce	CL$ 415,000,000
Under development by 2015	Rehabilitation of Monseñor Alvarez square	CL$ 36,649,760
Under development by 2015	Improvement of recreational facilities: Juanita Oriente	CL$ 144,075,367
Under development by 2015	Improvement of green areas: Juanita Oriente	CL$ 215,000,000
Under development by 2015	Installation of LED public lighting: Juanita Oriente	CL$ 6,828,242
Under development by 2015	Installation of LED public lighting: El Sauce	CL$ 18,000,000
Under development by 2015	Rehabilitation of Lagunillas square	CL$ 27,000,000
Under development by 2015	Change of public lighting: El Volcán San José I	CL$ 25,000,000
Under development by 2015	Installation of LED public lighting: El Mariscal	CL$ 28,800,000

Source: Author, based on information provided by Municipalidad de Puente Alto

As already said, BdM has had intervention beyond the regular programme because it is as an Emblematic Neighbourhood, in other words a territory with a wider budget, in which the Ministry of Interior has also been involved. This has entailed the creation of a common CVD that included the *dirigentes* of most neighbourhoods. This Emblematic Neighbourhood was called 'La Cañamera'; the works that this programme involved are summarised in Table 8.2. The two major interventions were the construction of the Park Juan Pablo II on top of a former landfill called La Cañamera, and the construction of two rainwater collectors on the main roads Juanita and Quitalmahue (Figure 8.3). The park and rainwater collectors have a scale and cost that could not have been included under a regular intervention by the PQMB.

Table 8.2 | List of works and investment in BdM as an Emblematic Neighbourhood

Year execution	Name	Investment
2011 - 2014	Construction of Park Juan Pablo II (ex La Cañamera)	CL$ 2,603,588,738
2013 - 2014	Rainwater collectors: Juanita y Quitalmahue	CL$ 2,074,576,091
2014	Pavement: Sargento Menadier tramo 3A	CL$ 134,026,579
2014 - 2015	Pavement: Sargento Menadier tramo 3B	CL$ 501,734,860
Under development by 2015	Rehabilitation of Av. Juanita and Sargento Menadier	CL$ 31,542,548

Source: Author, based on information provided by Municipalidad de Puente Alto

Figure 8.3 | Interventions of the Emblematic neighbourhood in BdM

Source: Author

8.1.2 Description of Plan integral

Even if the works done under the Emblematic Neighbourhood scheme implied a change of scale in terms of the approach to BdM, the interventions involved were still constrained by the scope of the PQMB programme, which is limited to action on public

or collective goods, and to a series of specific instruments. In that sense, over the years it was clear that an intervention in BdM required a different set of tools to be truly comprehensive. This was at the root of the designation of a presidential delegate to develop an *Integral Plan* for BdM, as explained by a government official from the *Barrios* programme:

> Michelle Bachelet's government plan includes the logic of intervening in territories to decrease the inequalities gap, and BdM was chosen because of its significance. A presidential delegate was appointed to define a master plan in coordination with many sectors: the *barrios* programme, economy, transport, etc. The thesis (that in my view is correct) was that the problems of this area cannot be addressed just with housing, just with connectivity, just with public spaces, but with all of them together. It is about building a narrative of integration, in which the starting point is introducing an integral view.

The Integral Plan also appears as an urgent answer to a problem that the state itself created. The Second Opportunity set up the narrative among the residents that BdM is an area that should be abandoned, an area in which it is not possible to live without developing a real alternative for those who wish to stay. However, discussion with residents usually shows that people would prefer to stay in the area if they were offered less drastic solutions, in contrast to the narrative supported by *dirigentes* aligned with the demolition plans. So there is a need to create alternatives that allow residents to move within BdM, improving their life quality, connectivity, green areas, security and particularly improving their housing conditions.

The institutional scheme used for this Integral Plan was borrowed from a post-disaster model, in which the President directly designates someone to coordinate the different actions in a defined territory. The designated person, Hernán Ortega, had not conincidentally worked before in a similar management role for the post-disaster plans in Alto Hospicio, in San Pedro de la Costa in Concepción, and in Tocopilla. At the beginning the delegate was going to report to the Ministry of Interior, but then it was decided he would work under the supervision of the Regional Intendancy (*Intendencia*), in collaboration with the Regional Government (GORE), and would work directly with the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of the Interior. The delegate was recruited at the end of 2014, but since then the budget has only covered the salary costs of the team.

There has been no budget for the implementation of projects, so the role of the delegate is to develop a master plan coordinating the actions and investment of other sectors, and this requires a huge amount of political work.

In December 2014, a large initial meeting was hosted in BdM, with the participation of around 150 *dirigentes* from the area, as well as a series of high level regional and municipal authorities from the regional government, the senate, and different ministries such as housing, culture, health, and transport. The encounter included a series of participatory workshops to discuss different issues and to prioritise the main features of the plan (Figure 8.4).

Figure 8.4 | Images of first participatory encounter of Plan Integral, December 2014

Source: Author

The first goal after the meeting was to define the next steps of the programme. In relation to that, the delegate explained that the task during 2015 was to identify the needs of the

area and then to look for answers with the relevant public institutions, for example, with Public Works to improve connectivity, with Education, Health or Housing Ministries. It was also decided that the priority would be the construction in the short term of a police and fire station in the area where El Volcán II used to be.

As expected, one of the main concerns of the programme and the master plan it has developed relates to the design of adequate housing alternatives for those BdM residents who wanted to remain there but in less overcrowded and better conditions, looking particularly at the reality of the Social Condos, where a survey (called 'local census') was conducted in order to portray the experience and needs of the residents. The delegate explained that they had concluded that BdM had been "an accumulation of mistakes since the very beginning" (Ortega, 2015), as everything had been done without any kind of urban planning, and that this was the first issue that should have been addressed.

The Integral Plan will give priority to some groups, including the elderly and disabled, families with more than four members living in overcrowded conditions (42sqm or less), and those who are not coping and have decided that their only option is to leave BdM. Ortega claims that by clearly identifying these groups and the numbers of people within them it would be possible to develop proposals that include a series of strategies to give solutions to all, including continuing with the demolitions, but also proposing different housing alternatives such as reconversions of flats and construction of new houses. The Integral Plan includes an evaluation in each neighbourhood and has decided to start in Marta Brunet as the first pilot, as an alternative to the demand of the residents to implement the Second Opportunity there.

The other main situation in which the Integral Plan is working is the design of a Civic Centre in the area of El Volcán II, just next to the Park Juan Pablo II. As already stated, the first interventions will be police and fire stations, but the master plan design also envisages a series of public facilities and commercial and cultural spaces. The master plan also proposes investments in connectivity, particularly to give connectivity to Sargento Menadier, opening a new link road with the rest of Puente Alto. It also includes a social

and communication strategy, developing an identity (under the slogan "I ♥ BdM"), trying to contest the negative stigma and the notion that the area is a ghetto.

As has been said, the realisation of these projects depends on other institutions and therefore it requires political commitment from many actors. Even though this is not the first master plan developed for BdM, it appears to be the first time that the commitment of so many actors has been aligned. According to the delegate, the 2015/2016 plan already included some arrangements with the ministries of Housing and Social Development, and pulled together a significant budget from different sectors in order to realise some of the proposals, including the improvement of 750 homes in Social Condos and 1,300 independent units, and the reconversion of the El Volcán II area.

8.2 A discussion about the challenges

Following this description, this section uses the five common elements defined in Chapter 7 as lenses to investigate these two urban programmes and their approach to the territory. The analysis presented in this section seeks to understand whether the approach to the territory proposed by these two initiatives is dealing with the main challenges identified in the housing programmes researched.

This section presents an analysis related to the idea of hope introduced in the introduction of this research, a hope that "is intentional and directed towards the future only in relation to an object that is faced in the present" (Ahmed, 2004:184), looking with optimism at the principles behind these programmes, trying to find out if they are intending to approach the new challenges identified earlier as the main barriers to addressing economic, social and political inequalities through housing policies.

8.2.1 Institutional order: Sectoral agendas, fragmentation and targeting

One of the main obstacles identified in the analysis of the housing programmes was the institutional order, which tends to promote sectoral rather than integrated agendas, the fragmentation and centralisation of institutions and instruments rather than institutional

cohesion, and the use of targeting rather than universalist principles. What about the PQMB and the Integral Plan in BdM? Are they challenging the institutional order to move towards a more integrated, comprehensive and universalist approach?

Certainly, the narrative of an *integral approach* is at the core of both programmes. This narrative is one of the principles behind the PQMB and is even present in the name 'Integral Plan'. The idea that the PQMB proposes an integral view was mentioned in most of the interviews with authorities and government officials, and there is a general agreement about the fact that the most successful cases are those with bigger budgets and conceived on a larger scale, in which it was possible to develop some sort of *integral* approach. Usually the (lack of) coordination between the SEREMI, the municipality and the community poses a significant problem for the PQMB, and it seems like the Emblematic Neighbourhoods scheme, that has a different institutional order, have managed to achieve the integration of different sectors and initiatives in a more comprehensive way. Government officials acknowledge that it is not easy to have control over more integral approaches, but they are also critical of the over-instrumentalisation of some of the processes, particularly during Piñera's government, recognising the importance of dealing with the complex nature of the issues.

Now, how does this *integral approach* translate into the institutional order? In these two programmes, there are three elements identified by the interviewees as the main areas requiring more institutional integration: (1) the relationship between qualitative urban and quantitative housing approaches; (2) the challenges in terms of centralisation and fragmentation of the decision-making process; and (3) the challenges in terms of new instruments.

As already discussed, housing policies in Chile have been seen as successful in quantitative terms, as for decades their main object was the construction of units to reduce the housing deficit. One of the main changes has been moving away from policies focused strictly on housing units, and both the PQMB and Integral Plan are part of that trend. As explained by a professional from the Studies Department at MINVU: "the housing-focused approach (*viviendismo*) should decrease, strengthening other lines of

action, with attention given to planning, to urbanism and to public spaces as places of encounter. I think that is the trend, but I think it is a slow process".

This transition from responses focused on individual units towards programmes that look almost exclusively at public goods, can be seen as part of a cycle, a pendulum movement from an approach too limited to housing, to one that stays 'outside the doors'. This is not an easy tension to resolve, and different policies may emphasis one of the aspects over the other. This tension has been observed in international experiences, for example in the case of Brazil, which moved from a traditional rationalist and modernist approach to a public space focus with programmes such as the *Favela Bairro,* returning to a more quantitative housing-oriented focus with *Minha Casa Minha Vida* (Fiori et al., 2001; 2014). In this process there are important challenges in seeking out a middle ground, as the return to the centrality of housing often implies a process in which "housing is being remembered, but important lessons are being forgotten" (Dias Simpson, 2013:21).

In the case of Chile, the strong focus on quantitative housing production over recent decades suggests that the change towards a focus on public spaces introduced by Chile Barrio and then more importantly by the PQMB, was a major shift. However, the tension is still there, and one of the main criticisms of the PQMB is that it does not deal with housing issues, which are at the core of people's concerns in vulnerable areas. As a government official reflects, "if you undertook a survey and asked people to make a list and prioritise their main problems, probably the first 20 would be about housing, and then the 21st and 22nd would be about public space, transport, etc." Those professionals who work on the ground also perceive this reality. As one member of the *Barrios* team in the Municipality of Puente Alto explains, this directly affects the engagement and participation of residents in deliberative instances, as it is hard to motivate them when most of their problems relate to their home conditions.

Acknowledgement of this tension has pushed the government to review the PQMB, and it is currently working on a proposal that allows combining PQMB action with subsidies for the improvement of housing, using an existing instrument called 'Family assets protection programme' (PPPF – *Programa de Protección del Patrimonio Familiar*). This is

also the reason why the Integral Plan was created on top of the Emblematic Neighbourhood programme, even though the territorial unit in which they work is exactly the same. The Integral Plan, as discussed, has the design of housing alternatives for BdM residents as one of its main concerns and goals, and even though there is still some scepticism about its results among government members, it is certainly a step forward in the direction of integration between housing and urban policies.

The second aspect regarding integration in the institutional order, relates to the challenges in terms of centralisation and fragmentation of the decision making process. In the case of PQMB, because it is a national policy there is an important effort to coordinate action with regional agencies and particularly with municipalities. In this respect there is also an attempt to transfer capabilities to local governments, as in most cases municipalities are in charge of preparing the application for the neighbourhoods and managing the execution of the programme. It has also implied an increasing number of professionals of different backgrounds – particularly architecture, social work, community psychology, and sociology – who have developed skills related to community work while working with the PQMB.

In any case there are still important challenges related to the fragmentation of institutions and the decentralisation of decision-making capacities. One of the aspects highlighted during the interviews was the significant gap between what is discussed in central offices, or even at municipal level, and what the reality is in the territory. This problem, also identified for the housing programmes researched, is found in the PQMB despite the efforts it has made to transfer decision making to communities and CVDs.

In the case of Puente Alto, even though the PQMB considered that the definition of building-trust-interventions should be led by the CVD and community, the municipal team decided to keep this decision at the level of the municipality. The explanation they gave is that "it is the model of the programme; it is not decided by the community, we just consult with them, but we agree on what to do first so the implementation can take place quickly". This is an example of how the translation of the policy into the territories is affected by different interpretations of the programme even within public institutions.

Both the Emblematic Neighbourhoods scheme and the Integral Plan are meant to coordinate the action of different sectors and ministries, and that is certainly an important shift. There are challenges anyway in integrating different agendas that intervene in the same territory. For example, the PQMB of La Cañamera and the Integral Plan are two initiatives working in exactly the same territorial unit, yet they pursue different goals that should be complementary, but sometimes clash. A municipal official working at the PQMB in BdM describes this situation: "Now the Integral Plan has started and that also affects us, because people tend to put everything in the same bag, and of course we are not the same, we do not have the same goals, we have specificities, and our main task is to ensure that our programme achieves its own goals".

This description shows how the logic of 'protection' of each programme operates even if they are working in the same territory. The head of the Integral Plan ensures that there is an agreement in terms of not using the programmes for political ends, with transparency between different units (sometimes governed by different coalitions, such as the Municipality of Puente Alto and central government), but there are always frictions and fragmentation that are difficult to address.

The third and final aspect consists of the challenges in terms of new instruments. The presidential delegate of the Integral Plan is emphatic regarding this approach: problems such as those observed in BdM, which are the result of the application of *narrow norms*, cannot be solved with more narrow norms. In that sense the PQMB has been able to introduce at least two institutional elements that represent a change in the kind of instruments or norms available for urban interventions. One is the 'contract' between communities and the state, as an instrument that allows the creation of a common ground and an accountability tool for the programme. The second is the incorporation of participative deliberation as a central component of the programme, hitherto absent from official and national programmes of this scale. And in terms of the Integral Plan, even if there are no new tools and instruments related to it, there is a significant effort to develop mechanisms for coordinating different sectors after the implementation of the plan. Many interviews made reference to the idea that what the Integral Plan is planning to do

in BdM in terms of housing and inter-sectoral coordination may serve – once again – as a model that can provide lessons for intervention in other vulnerable areas.

8.2.2 Individual choices vs. collective processes

Both the PQMB and the Integral Plan prioritise collective processes over individual choices. As described previously in this chapter, at the core of the PQMB is the idea of collective deliberation and decision making, and as the PQMB only involves public and common goods, the coordination among residents is not just desirable but necessary. In the case of the Integral Plan, even though it embraces the logic that each family should be able to decide whether they want to leave or stay, it assumes that, at least for those who stay in BdM, there should be a collectively agreed solution rather than just the delivery of vouchers, as happened with the Second Opportunity.

The collective processes of decision making are not without challenges. For the PQMB, for example, there have been some tensions related to the creation of CVDs as an institution for residents' representation as there is an overlap with the traditional *Juntas de Vecinos* or Neighbourhood Associations. The level of these tensions, which can even lead to competition between residents' organisations, depends on how much historical presence these associations have had in each neighbourhood. In the case of BdM, as all the interventions have been in territorial units different from the existing one (with the exception of El Mariscal, which started in 2015), the creation of the CVDs makes sense as each committee is an organisation with an appropriate geographical scale.

That does not mean, however, that there are no challenges related to the establishment of a fluid dialogue with the communities as a collective. One of these challenges relates to the task of tackling distrust, as it seems that in some territories there is a "natural resistance, unawareness, and ignorance about architectural projects, urban management or participatory logics", as described by a government official. This results in the programme usually arriving in the territories within a climate of resistance. Part of the task of the programme in that context is to build trust, and professionals working in some of the emblematic and critical cases agree that one of the main achievements is the

strengthening of the capacity of communities to get organised and to build bonds among residents and between residents and institutions.

In that sense one of the obstacles identified by the Integral Plan team in BdM is precisely the lack of clear official commitments that its residents have faced over the years, and the increased distrust towards public institutions that this has triggered. The presidential delegate describes how the lack of precision and commitment from different institutions, particularly the SERVIU, has triggered questioning and distrust from the community.

The lack of trust is just one of the obstacles in terms of implementing truly participatory procedures that involve a collective process. Another identified difficulty is the fact that sometimes the local or municipal teams attach a low level of importance to participatory processes, as in the case of the building-trust-initiatives in Puente Alto. They recognise that "when it is about achieving the goals on time, participation is sometimes given a low priority". Another obstacle identified by the authorities relates to the lack of expertise from the state in measuring the success of participation. At the start the logic was to quantify success according to the number of participants in meetings, but there is a growing awareness of the need to understand participation as a means of empowering residents as "agents in recovering their neighbourhoods, both in the individual and collective sense", as described by a PQMB professional.

There is another important challenge in achieving greater levels of collective involvement in both programmes. This relates to the language, capabilities and practices required from the professionals and from community members. In order to achieve the involvement of the community and good dialogue between the community and the professionals a common language needs to be developed – what Dong (2008) has called 'design capabilities' – that allows for different kinds of expertise to be shared and for tensions to be acknowledged. But as a professional from PQMB reflects, it also requires the development of common visions that ensure the sustainability of interventions:

> I think these participatory programmes require a language, a common willingness, a shared wish for wellbeing. It has to be shared with commitment, with conviction, by all the actors involved. That common view needs to be built,

> because when there is a shared view of common wellbeing, and not just someone's individual perspective, it is easier to achieve more ambitious goals.

Promoting the construction of common goals is not an easy task, particularly when residents are facing important individual challenges.

A final challenge identified in the task of building collective procedures that guide the process beyond individual decisions, is the tension between dialogue with the *dirigentes* and direct dialogue with the residents. *Who participates* is a question frequently addressed by the interviewees, as the problem of addressing all communication through the *dirigentes* seems to be an important issue in BdM. A government official describes it like:

> Community organisations have their own tasks and interests (…) but if you go and talk directly with the residents, their interests are very different. *Dirigentes* have sometimes been in their role for ten or more years, they are used to having their picture taken with the mayor and being able to ask favours directly of him, favours for the organisation, but hardly for the residents' wellbeing.

These tensions are even more extreme when considering the relationship between the PQMB and the Second Opportunity. As described by a government official, "there is a paradox, as the PQMB works in some areas promoting *topophilia,* the love of place, while there are people whose main wish is to achieve greater individual residential wellbeing, and that means that if they can leave, they will".

This gap also translates into difficulties in motivating residents' involvement, as some PQMB professionals said that distrust of the *dirigentes* is even apparent on some occasions. The Integral Plan has also faced this challenge, and in a particularly complex way as it has had to deal with *dirigentes* from the 49 neighbourhoods of BdM. The head of the programme identifies the internal survey during 2015 as a key step in the direction of understanding the needs and desires of residents, and not just organisations, without oversimplifying the social fabric of each neighbourhood.

8.2.3 Clientelism and dependency

The tensions between *dirigentes* and residents' interests are closely linked to the third aspect identified in the analysis of the policies: the concentration of clientelism and dependency networks in vulnerable territories, which directly affects the capacity of urban programmes to challenge political and social inequalities. Are these two programmes, the PQMB and the Integral Plan, free from these logics? Unfortunately, this is probably the aspect in which these programmes have made a less dramatic shift. They have managed to propose some new institutional arrangements, putting collective processes at the centre of their logics, and offering a change of scale, but they haven't been able to challenge the deeply embedded political logics in the territory.

The size, location and visibility of BdM have transformed it into the perfect arena for political battles. As a government official describes, referring to the political negotiations to get resources for interventions in the area, "(politicians) are interested in ensuring 15,000 votes; that is all. That is what they say to me in the conversations *'look... there are 15,000 votes'...*" The conditions in BdM also imply that the actions that these programmes are taking there are always seen as a *pilot* for intervention in other areas. A professional reflects about the new scale of intervention observed in BdM: "it is some kind of school for the government... and hopefully these new interventions will be successful, because the learning from this process would affect how investment is formulated in territorial terms". Also, there is a huge amount of attention and pressure in the kind of interventions that different institutions are developing, increasing the contested nature of the territory.

This contestation translates into clientelist battles that directly affect the transformative potentials of programmes. One dimension that is affected relates to the point just discussed about the development of bonds of trust and confidence. The community resistance described by some of the government officials has its roots at least partially in the mistrust towards the political networks behind these programmes, and the idea that there is always an *instrumentalisation* of the community, its support and the processes behind the interventions. This instrumentalisation is perceived as performed by the authorities, but also sometimes by local *dirigentes*. This perception has many

manifestations described by the interviewees: the idea that municipal and parliamentary authorities appear in the territory only during electoral campaign periods; the idea that some *dirigentes* behave like patrons in the territory; the idea that the demands of residents differ from those raised by the authorities; the idea that the decisions made by the authorities are sometimes arbitrary and self-serving.

The professionals of the programmes recognise an important challenge here, as the *dirigentes* are democratically elected representatives, and that is a structure that must be respected. But there is also an acknowledgement of the importance of generating community tools to challenge the exercise of power, which can sometimes lead to *dirigentes* who have concentrated all the networks and the know-how for decades saying "if things are not done in this way, then you can do it on your own".

The question of instrumentalisation of the programmes is a central concern for government officials, and it can be observed in many situations. For example, some professionals questioned the decision to include some neighbourhoods in the PQMB's 2013 call. As has been explained, these neighbourhoods were actually groups of more than one *villa.* "From a morphological point of view, there is no vision of the social structure of the communities, but there is rather a logic of using the programme to improve some public spaces and fulfil municipal campaign promises", comments a government official. Another example observed was the tension that dominated the discussion during the participatory meeting of the Integral Plan in December 2014. During the meeting the discussion turned at one point towards the conflict between those who think that BdM should become a separate *comuna*, and those who support the idea the BdM should remain as part of Puente Alto. This conflict is mainly related to electoral agendas and each position is clearly supported by one of the two main political coalitions. The fact that this tension dominated the discussion rather than the actual content of the Plan is an example of how a programme meeting can be taken over by external agendas.

The Integral Plan has tried to challenge some of these dynamics. For instance, there was a political decision not to include the question "do you want to leave/stay in BdM" in the

survey that was conducted. In the words of the presidential delegate: "If we had included it, it would have been the only response that everyone would have looked at; we were more interested in understanding the composition of the group and their perceptions about their environment (…) not just the *dirigentes,* but the families". This decision was made in response to an agenda dominated by the tension between groups who were pro- and against the demolitions, accompanied by different political coalitions. The survey obtained responses from 85% of the families in the Social Condos to which it applied.

All these problems, however, are part of a much wider issue that goes beyond these programmes in volume and complexity. It is not just that the clientelist networks are deeply embedded in territorial logics, but also that the current political climate reinforces them. There is a deep political crisis at national level, triggered by a series of corruption cases, and as a result trust in institutions and politicians has dropped to one of its lowest levels ever. This means that the concerns of the authorities are mainly governed by, on the one hand, regaining people's trust, and on the other, ensuring that those in authority are not involved publicly in corruption scandals. This generates a series of dynamics in the territory, increasing tensions and suspicions. Also, these large-scale programmes need the explicit support of the authorities to gain the required investment – if it is the municipality, support from the right-wing senator of the constituency, and if it is the central government, support from the left-wing senator. The convulsed political environment, however, does not contribute to generating the conditions for this support.

For the professionals working in the programmes (particularly the Integral Plan that is still at an early stage), this creates an uncertain atmosphere, and their main concern is about getting the investment and commitment to fulfil the expectations that have already been created during the territorial work. The presidential delegate even makes jokes about the personal commitment he has made to fulfil these expectations: "they asked me to drive this vessel, and I am just asking to be given the tools to drive it (…); I said this the other day in a community meeting – it is not a joke: if I cannot fulfil the promises we have made, I will protest with the people, I don't have the face to just let them down" (Ortega, 2015).

These are very complicated dynamics of *ownership*, paternalism, clientelism and dependency, very difficult to portray without oversimplification. A series of implicit agreements have been made from the different parties working in the territory, in which every institution can work on their programmes and interventions without intervening in each other's area. But at the end of the day, and particularly when the 2016 and 2017 local and national elections are so close, the notion of territorial ownership has appeared again. As described by a government official, this is even explicit in the conversations with elected authorities: "I will not disturb your work until mid-2016, but then, it doesn't matter what you do, you and your senators can give everything to the residents, can even walk naked in BdM, but then I come back, and it is over". With these concerns in mind, these larger-scale programmes struggle constantly to move away from these dynamics.

8.2.4 Design as a transformative tool

As discussed, design as a tool for transformation has been completely absent from most housing policies and programmes over recent decades, because the policies and programmes involved privatising decisions and reducing the instruments of the programmes to financial mechanisms such as subsidies and incentives. Both the PQMB and the Integral Plan have been making an effort to bring back the design process to public institutions, with teams working in collaboration with communities and local stakeholders. Both programmes, as in the other areas discussed, face a series of important challenges in this respect.

First, there is an important gap related to what some government officials call 'community skills'. This refers to the lack of skills of planners, urban designers and architects in working with vulnerable communities. As a professional from the PQMB reflects, "what you design from a technical point of view, never accords 100% with the reality in the territory; actually, it is lucky that there is any matching at all". The identified gap is not just between the design disciplines and the territorial reality, but also between the requirements of the programme and the design disciplines. While the first one manifests itself in the distance of the design disciplines from the expectation, language and skills of the communities, the second one can be seen in the pressure that

the programmes exert in terms of timeframes, and the lack of institutional tools to assess design quality and suitability.

For the PQMB, some of the professionals recognise that architecture and design represent one of the *Achilles heels* of the programme. It is interesting that design weakness is recognised in the discussion, as for many years it has been absent from the debate. The approach to architecture and design conducted by the state has had different stages: in the 1960s and 1970s institutions such as the CORVI and CORMU developed their own design identity, linked to the international modernist movement, an identity that today is recognised as an asset, and even though many projects built in that era have critical problems today, there is a recognition they have some value in terms of modern heritage, given the attempt they made to create a city project. On the other hand, the design identity of the SERVIU is also very clear and recognised, linked generally to a negative perception of precarious and cheap solutions realised in the image of the Social Condos.

In this context, one of the architects of the PQMB legitimately asks about the design identity of the *Barrios* programme: "The CORVI in the past, and the SERVIU more recently have their design identities, positive or negative; today we have a new programme for recovering public spaces, and we should define a common approach to architecture, not necessarily formal, but at least conceptual, discussing the sense and meaning of *public*, and particularly *public architecture.* That discussion is completely absent". These questions are particularly relevant for the interventions in *barrios* in BdM, as the design of the regular programmes is located in the municipality, and the design of the interventions under the Emblematic Neighbourhood La Cañamera (Figure 8.5) is managed by the SERVIU.

Figure 8.5 | Design of Park Juan Pablo II (Ex La Cañamera)

Source: Information provided by SEREMI Barrios

The Integral Plan, on the other hand, is facing the same kind of challenges as the PQMB regarding the design of public spaces and common facilities. But additionally, the ambition of the Integral Plan is to get involved directly in housing design, and this is a major shift as for years the approach of the state to housing provision was exclusively through financial instruments, leaving in developers' hands the design decisions on how to deal with density, and the implications of those decisions for the way residents inhabit the private and public spaces of the territory. According to the presidential delegate, the Integral Plan seeks to propose new schemes for mid-rise buildings, understanding that density cannot be dismissed as a strategy, but new standards need to be introduced "with flats of 56-58sqm, three consolidated bedrooms, finished, with adequate common areas, parking, playgrounds, in which each block has its own decent space; with streets and connectivity" (Ortega, 2014).

These are ambitious prospects, but a potentially fertile field for exploring the potentials of design in public projects of housing. For now, design has been used already to try to instil a new vision for BdM residents and the rest of the city, using the branding of "I ♥ BdM", with the idea that instilling a positive image is necessary to contest the narratives of the stigma of ghettoisation.

8.2.5 A problem of scale: Land policy and citywide processes

The final aspect to analyse is the capacity of these programmes to challenge scales of action and to deal with citywide processes, and how they face these challenges in the context of a non-existent land policy. These changes can be observed in various dimensions: there are changes in terms of the scale of the territory, not just in relation to the size of the intervention area, but to the kind of projects, their urban role and relationship to the city; there are changes related to the resources targeted for these areas; and there are changes in terms of the timeframes proposed.

The PQMB, even in its regular scheme, was able to raise the concept of 'neighbourhood' (*barrio*) as an intervention unit, and this has been very successful in its cultural appropriation, even in colloquial vocabulary. "Publicly, the concept of *barrio* is very strong now, you see organisations of residents protecting 'their neighbourhoods', the creation of neighbourhood identity, etc.", a professional from the programme explains, and the PQMB played a role in that cultural adaptation. As discussed in the case of BdM, however, the decision to unify various *villas* for each programme, distorts the notion of neighbourhood proposed by the programme, as the territorial unit doesn't match the existing social and physical fabric.

But both the PQMB and the Integral Plan are working with a new scale of territorial management: the Priority zones, the Emblematic Neighbourhood, or the Territory, as referred to in the Integral Plan, work on a scale that exceeds the logic of the neighbourhood and proposes a new urban management unit, opening a series of possibilities for public bodies. A professional from the Studios Department of *Barrios* reflects:

> What is interesting about the definition of these new operational limits is that it creates a new urban management unit that is in between the neighbourhood and the city. It somehow constitutes a platform for the articulation of investments. And that works perfectly for BdM, because BdM is not a neighbourhood, it is a territory.

This change of scale creates various challenges. A professional from the PQMB describes the task they are facing in valorising the territory with interventions that work at a larger scale and footprint. In the case of BdM, for instance, it is not a square at the neighbourhood level, it is a park with aspirations to be the main public space for a wider urban sector. The same happens with the rainwater collectors, in which the improvements directly affect the quality of life of thousands of residents. And this change also implies a change of scale in the CVD that in practice works like a BdM *dirigentes* assembly.

The new scale also implies a change in terms of the resources available. Professionals of the PQMB recognise that the 'exceptional' experiences (in critical and emblematic neighbourhoods) tend to be more successful in achieving the programme's goals, as there is an important difference in terms of the available resources, and this difference translates into opportunities to develop more radical transformative projects. On the other hand there is a critical view about the way in which the regular PQMB scheme distributes the budget, creating a dispersion of resources, with cases in which the actual impact for the residents is very limited. As a government official says: "when you build community centres or little squares you are making an investment, but it affects a limited area, with less power and projection. In BdM we made a park, the rainwater collectors, and that triggers real changes (…) the rainwater collectors in BdM, for example, are a less visible project, but very important; it has an urban scale that responds to a real need prioritised by the residents, within the framework of what this programme is allowed to do". In the case of the Integral Plan, the dependency of resources from other programmes represents a major barrier to its success, constraining its capacity to achieve its goals.

In dealing with new scales of action, these programmes are attempting to face one of the most common problems of urban interventions, which treat parts of the city as separate

entities rather than as part of a system, increasing fragmentation and disintegration. As described by Fiori and Brandão:

> Only too often planners and urbanists have been busy addressing 'pieces' of the city as if they were disconnected from the city as a whole and its multiple scales. (…) This tradition of planning and misguided urbanism is one that only replicates a logic of disembeddedness and fragmentation (2010:190).

The change of scale presents new challenges in terms of the time and processes needed. The deliberative logic has been incorporated into the PQMB, but there are still constraints in terms of rigid time frameworks, particularly for the regular version of the programme. As a government official describes: "neighbourhoods always need more time, they always ask for extensions of the programme, either because it was a good experience and they want to keep working, or because it was a bad experience and they didn't manage to achieve the expected results on time". The flexibility of the timeframes is portrayed as a key issue, not just because the current four-year intervention time seems too short, but because each case might require different time planning. "Problems are different in each neighbourhood, and that is why the diagnosis phase is so important, so you can identify the main problems, which are very different between one neighbourhood and another", a professional reflects.

There are also challenges related to the programme follow-up, for example in ensuring the continuity of activities in the Park Juan Pablo II. The municipality, which is in charge of the park's administration, is willing to organise activities, but other officials and residents have varying perceptions about how intense the use of the park has been since its opening.

These programmes are working with new operational units of urban planning that can allow integral, inter-sectoral, strategic and multi-scalar actions. These units can act at an intermediate scale to intervene in vulnerable areas, but also other strategic, heritage or commercial areas that might require the same scale of action, in between the neighbourhood and the city. This is just another example of the need for adequate urban instruments to deal with complex problems. As the presidential delegate reflects:

> You cannot pretend to solve the problems of BdM under current norms and subsidies, under the voucher system; that is not the solution. Exceptional situations require integral answers, and integral answers require different norms from those used historically. So our proposal is to develop a Master Plan based on the fact that we have to produce the city, and to produce the city we need to intervene in housing; from the house to the public space, from inside to outside (Ortega, 2014).

Certainly, the scale in terms of size, resources and time is one of the main issues that these programmes have opened up. In the context of the discussion of the establishment of the PNDU and the discussion about land policy, these questions become even more relevant. The Integral Plan is initiating part of this discussion, developing proposals that integrate housing solutions, connectivity, facilities, and thereby opening a discussion about the involvement of the state in urban land production and management. Integrating these approaches with a deep discussion about the mechanisms for housing production would inevitably lead to questioning the logic of vouchers as the only possible instrument for delivering housing units, forcing a revision of the role of the state and the market underlying housing policies.

In spite of the exceptionality of BdM, the implementation of these programmes is recognised as a possible model: there is a sense of responsibility regarding what the Integral Plan and the Emblematic Neighbourhood PQMB does in BdM, because it will probably be used as a model for other sectors, scaling-up the learning, particularly regarding housing and security. The question of scale also implies interrogating how the learning and transformation in exceptional cases can scale up to the city level, reaching neighbourhoods and communities that are not necessarily as visible to public opinion as BdM. This would require a process of systematisation and institutionalisation of the challenges and main lessons identified, including those described in this research.

Final comments: Looking for keys to housing policies

This chapter has explored two urban programmes that have intervened in the same territory as the housing programmes studied, but that for a series of reasons were not

included as part of the core case studies. Using the five challenges identified, the focus has been on reflecting about how the programmes are addressing the challenges, and what potential they have. In so doing, it seeks to understand the tools that these programmes have to complement the capacity of traditional housing policies to deal with inequalities.

The goal of this discussion has been to explore these programmes in terms of their institutional potential, looking for keys to further develop housing policies. Thus, even though the reflections have been based mainly on interviews with government officials and authorities, and probably do not therefore fully convey the multiple effects of these programmes on the territory, the analysis has allowed us to reflect on how the challenges identified in the housing policies researched are addressed by these urban programmes. Three of the challenges seem to be addressed, but not without difficulties, by the PQMB and Integral Plan. These challenges relate to: institutional order, sectoral agendas, fragmentation and targeting; individual choices vs. collective processes; and the problem of scale, land policy and citywide processes. There are important challenges related to the role of design as a transformative tool, and an even more dramatic gap in relation to the task of tackling the barriers created by clientelism and political dependency.

The five aspects used as lenses in this chapter emerged from the analysis of housing programmes in the territory. We have proposed that addressing them would increase the potential of housing for tackling multiple injustices and inequalities. Identifying that these two urban programmes are dealing with some of them, implies that there is a particular challenge to those policies that are directly involved with the production of housing (and therefore cities): It means that actually there are institutional attempts in those directions, but as housing production is constrained by quantitative metrics, it loses the opportunity of working in conversation with the principles that these urban plans are somehow attending. To fulfil the potential of housing as urbanism, housing policies need to incorporate the lessons learnt in urban programmes, not as two separate issues, but as part of the collective question of producing just cities. In doing so, housing policies would have the chance to deal with inequalities, fragmentation and exclusion, and to

look at the multiple challenges that that entitles for the disciplines of planning and urbanism.

Before moving to the conclusions it seemed important in this final analytical chapter to make an effort to include some reflections on the current efforts that public institutions are making to face the challenges of urban inequalities. Analysing them has shown that many of the answers to the challenges identified are already addressed by urban policies, and therefore an integral view that understands housing provision and urban plans as complementary element is absolutely indispensable to tackling inequalities. Including the analysis of these plans and projects has also allowed the presentation of more than just a critique of what has been done, but rather a reflection on what could be done. It is an attempt to stress the idea, discussed earlier, that being hopeful is a necessary part of making something happen.

CHAPTER 9

Housing Policies beyond Housing: Final Comments of a Journey towards Urbanism

Introduction

The first time I visited BdM was many years ago: during a visit as a teaching assistant on an architecture course, I saw it through the window from inside a hired bus. We stayed in the bus, just went around the area and looked at it through the windows. It is uncanny to recall this scene and then to realise that it was exactly the same place in which I would later conduct this research. It really feels like a long journey, and this thesis has tried to give an account of this process, while providing a wider reflection about housing, inequalities and the city.

In this concluding chapter, a series of final considerations is presented in order to wrap up the discussion, and also to open a wider debate about the possible paths to take. The first section presents a recap of the different conceptual lenses and approaches undertaken in this research, and the main contributions made, reflecting on a journey that went from intellectual and emotional concerns, to policy analysis and recommendations.

Secondly, it presents a final and more general discussion about the challenges identified for Chilean housing policies in reducing inequalities, particularly in relation to the idea of housing as urbanism, and the necessary conversation between policies that work at the moment with separate strategies at the urban and household scales. This section also seeks to open up the discussion beyond the situation in Chile, reflecting on these challenges at the international level.

And finally this chapter presents a concluding reflection about the role of housing and its production, particularly from the perspective of the configuration of cities, but also at the very private level of everyday life experience. In so doing, it seeks to reflect more widely

on the approaches, discussions and definitions of housing, which should occupy a central position in redefining the role of urbanism, to open up different ways to build cities and to live together.

9.1 The research journey

The normative discussion with which this research started related to the nature and object of social policies, and particularly the deeply political, emotional and intellectual motivations behind the definition of their scope. This required a series of discussions that were key to building the analysis presented. Revisiting some of them in this final chapter allows consideration of how this intellectual, political and empirical journey has developed, and how it can project to future considerations about housing policies, inequality and the city.

First, a discussion about inequality was presented, addressing it from a multidimensional perspective with a focus on economic, social and political aspects. In particular, this research proposed that the relationship between quantitative and qualitative inequalities is determined by the fact that the reduction of quantitative aspects is necessary and fundamental to initiate a process of tackling them, but it can only be sustained and intensified over time if it is accompanied by qualitative inequality reduction, involving aspects of recognition, and triggering cultural, social and political transformations that support the long-term project of economic redistribution.

Following the discussion on inequality, the tensions between inequality and poverty were considered. Over the years, poverty has become a much more complex concept, requiring qualitative and multi-sectorial approaches in order to address it. And as the evolution of ideas about poverty and their translation into policies have moved away from more quantitative and mono-sectorial approaches, the reduction of poverty started involving aspects of redistribution and recognition that are at the core of inequalities reduction. This research argues that policies focusing on the reduction of poverty cannot actually reduce poverty these days without addressing issues of quantitative and qualitative redistribution. And in addressing those issues, the object of the policies moves away from

poverty alleviation, towards aspects of inequality reduction and social justice, therefore requiring a different set of approaches and criteria.

Another significant issue that has been addressed is the idea of the city as a project. As the city and space are socially produced, they are not just the background against which inequalities are displayed, but can act to strengthen, challenge or reproduce them. In particularly, it has been suggested that in the production of cities, a focus on outcomes that contribute to the redistribution of wealth is necessary to initiate a process of decreasing inequality, but if those outcomes are not accompanied by just processes that trigger recognition and reduction of qualitative inequalities, the redistribution achievements will hardly be sustained over time.

The discussion on housing then centred on identifying the different aspects that would define it *as urbanism,* understanding housing as the set of efforts put together to provide homes, which involves not just the private space, but the city and social relations built alongside it as a key component of the city as an indivisible right. In particular, the discussion has developed in three directions: the notion of housing as both a right and a complex land market; the idea that housing is a process with multiple scales of action and footprints; and the key notion widely discussed now about housing as a multidimensional process.

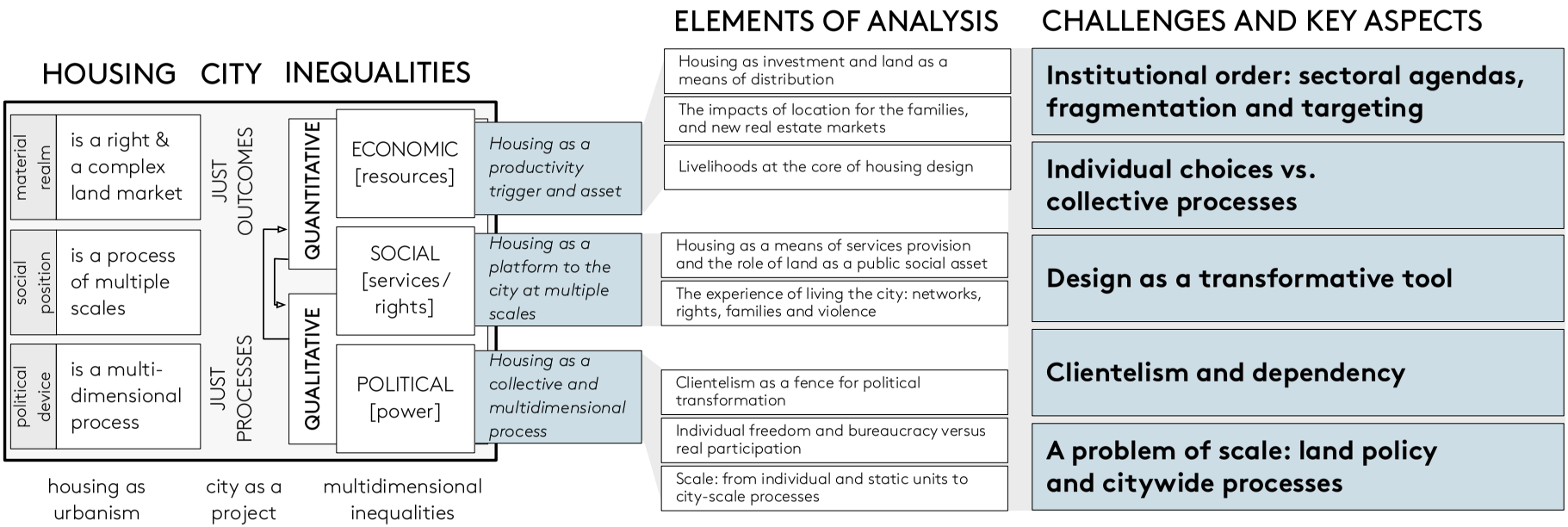
These discussions have led us to the definition of three conceptual bridges that aim to describe the ways in which housing production can contribute to decreasing inequalities: in terms of economic inequalities, the idea of housing as a *productivity trigger and an asset*, increasing the productive capacity of territories and families and enlarging the capacity of people to acquire new assets; in terms of social inequalities, the idea of housing as a *platform to the city at multiple scales*, increasing access to services and to the collective resources that the city offers as an indivisible right; and in terms of political inequalities, the idea of housing as *a collective and multidimensional process*, triggering distribution of political power, collective recognition and political participation in decision-making processes at different levels.

These three conceptual bridges were used as lenses to analyse the consequences of both programmes researched in BdM, looking at their main institutional and territorial aspects. In terms of economic inequality in particular, we looked at three aspects: housing as investment and land as a means of distribution; the impacts of location and new real estate markets; and livelihoods being at the core of housing design. For social inequalities, we looked at two features: housing as a means of services provision and the role of land as a social asset; and the experience of living the city from a family, violence and private/public life perspective. And finally, in relation to political inequality we looked at three elements: clientelism as a barrier to political transformation; individual freedom and bureaucracy versus real participation; and the scale of housing policies, from individual and static units to citywide processes.

The observations collected from each of these aspects in BdM led to the identification of five elements that constitute the main obstacles to consider in designing housing policies that are able to tackle multiple inequalities. These five elements are: the institutional order, particularly in relation to sectorial agendas, fragmentation and targeting principles; the tensions between individual choices and collective processes; the problems of clientelism and dependency; the challenges of design as a transformative tool; and last but not least, problems related to the scale of housing, land policy and citywide processes.

The use of diagrams throughout the conceptual discussion of this thesis has been more than a visual support: the connections between different discussions and concepts have been built partly by these representations. In reconstructing this conceptual narrative, it seems necessary to rebuild it through a final diagram synthesising this conceptual journey (Figure 9.1)

Figure 9.1 | Synthesis of Conceptual Journey



Source: Author

This research has been a process that, starting from intellectual and political concerns, moved closer to the territory, closer to daily life, but also closer to issues related to public policy design. It has been a process of trying to keep the balance between these three aspects: developing intellectual and political concerns; grasping the reality of the territory; and looking for practical outcomes and policy recommendations: How could one not get attached to the political, normative and emotional position that triggered my interest in this research, trying to keep it politically joyful and enjoyable, with the dose of anger and hope that such a task requires? How could one not engage with the complexities of the territory, the richness of life, the sometimes painful landscapes and life stories encountered, and try to grasp them as deeply as possible, as a way to enlarge our understanding of lived inequalities in a place as complex as BdM? And how could one not try to engage with public policy discussions, from a pragmatic standpoint, but also as an ethical duty, understanding that it is through engaging in that discussions that this research can contribute to shape the tools for addressing socio-spatial issues such as those discussed here?

The five elements discussed in the final chapters of this dissertation try to give an account of this encounter between three approaches: the intellectual and normative; the territorial; and the pragmatic, highlighting the idea that in addressing these challenges we are taking care of these three spheres. The fact that most of the elements identified actually emerged in the field and the work there, made the journey particularly stimulating and challenging as part of the never-ending task of reconciling intellectual, practical, technical, political, emotional, and lived knowledge.

Firstly, there are important tasks regarding the institutional order, particularly in relation to the excessive prominence given to the provision of subsidies and vouchers, the lack of instruments for active engagement by the state, and the challenges in terms of developing more inter-sectorial agendas, contesting the over-fragmentation and centralisation of institutions and targeting principles.

Secondly, there are tensions between the emphasis on individual choices as equating to participation, and the development of instruments and an institutional culture in which collective processes are not just seen as bureaucratic procedures, but as a means of engaging with the complexity of heterogeneous communities and systemic social networks of support and affection.

Thirdly, there is an inescapable political reality in the territories arising from the logics of clientelism and dependency, which directly affects the kind of political community built in the neighbourhoods, the kind of individual and collective decisions made, and the capacity of housing production to challenge political orders. Addressing this issue is probably outside the scope of housing policies, but should not be underestimated as a variable when considering the impact of policies in the territories, as it is the concentration of precariousness and multiple dependency in bounded areas of the city that allows these logics to persist.

Fourthly, there is the challenge of using design as a transformative tool in the production of housing. Nowadays the over-financialisation of housing policies has consolidated a logic in which housing is produced by incognito architects hidden behind standardised solutions. Design questions are key not just for a disciplinary reason, but rather because they give design a role as a tool for finding solutions to complex problems such as access to land, and the design of solutions for living together in contexts of increased density. This, once again, requires a questioning of the role of the state in either participating directly in the production of housing, or promoting practices that allow these questions to be embraced.

And finally, we have problems related to the scale of housing, land policy and citywide processes. Even though one could say that this final issue was identified as an intuition from the very beginning of this research, the analysis of the policies presented a much richer scenario for understanding these challenges. Problems of scale are about size, resources and time, and even if new territorial units are defined, an integral approach is needed in terms of engaging with citywide problems and scaling-up learning and practices. The absence of land policy in the country is politically and socially

unsustainable, as has already been recognised by authorities and public institutions such as the CNDU, but the design of such a policy needs to be developed carefully in order to ensure that it does not foster market mechanisms that consolidate current trends of exclusion, but rather challenges them with integral and citywide approaches.

With these five lenses in mind, we have looked at the institutional efforts made by two urban programmes that have intervened in BdM (PQMB and the Integral Plan), identifying that their approach is an indispensable complement to those programmes focused exclusively on housing provision. So the efforts of these programmes at the urban scale are seen as key to the discussion about housing policies, and to building clearer paths towards opening up their possibilities for reducing inequalities. This means that there are institutional attempts to address the challenges identified, and therefore the main task would be to create a conversation between these urban plans and housing production, understood as parts of the indivisible problem of the city as a right. This necessarily unified approach is what we will review in the next section.

9.2 Housing policies beyond housing and the role of urbanism

The concept of *housing as urbanism* has been a thread throughout this document, discussed and defined in Chapter 2, and used as a way to gather together the multiple aspects of housing proposed throughout the research.

Observing the effects of housing policies in the territory, this research looked for hints of the presence of urbanism in the construction of housing. Paradoxically, while looking for indications in the programmes officially labelled as 'housing policies', this research has found that there is a series of urban programmes that, without necessarily being involved in the production of housing units, are dealing with the main challenges of housing as urbanism as identified in this thesis. So the question of housing as urbanism moves from a conceptual field to one with very practical implications at the policy level. The role of urbanism lies precisely in coordinating and putting together the efforts of multiple actors and policies working in the city at different scales and in different spheres. It seems that

in the case of Chile, some of the ingredients for an understanding of housing as urbanism, and therefore able to tackle multiple inequalities, are present but are dispersed in different programmes. Re-examining the role of urbanism would imply putting together the efforts displayed in terms of housing production and urban plans, understanding that the different scales in which these programmes operate need to be coordinated and to work in a systemic way.

Repositioning the question of urbanism in the discussion of housing as a discipline that puts together the coordinated efforts and interventions of the city at different scales implies giving a central role to the questions of space and space production. The relationship between the articulation of multiple scales and the production of space should be central to the understanding of the construction of cities. This was already clear in the search for a unitary theory of space developed by Lefebvre in the 1970s. Lefebvre explains how the fragmented understanding of space and its crystallisation in non-conversational disciplines dealing with different scales need to be challenged by a unitary theory of space. This challenge at the conceptual realm remains relevant today, particularly when thinking of its policy and disciplinary implications. In Lefebvre's words:

> The housing, habitation – the human 'habitat', so to speak – are the concern of architecture. Towns, cities – urban space – are the bailiwick of the discipline of urbanism. As for larger, territorial spaces, regional, national, continental or worldwide, these are the responsibility of planners and economists. At times these 'specializations' are telescoped into one another under the auspices of that privileged actor, the politician. (…) This state of affairs, of which the foregoing remarks do not claim to be a full critical analysis, would be brought to an end if a truly unitary theory were to be developed (1991:12).

What Lefebvre refers to as 'urbanism' is what most traditional urban plans are concerned with. We have argued here, however, that urbanism is actually the discipline that should work on the interconnections and the multiple dimensions – economic, social, political and spatial – that put the different scales together. Such an understanding of urbanism would allow us to recognise the potential, challenges and cracks working at different scales, reframing the understanding of housing production and the city, and their translation into political and policy challenges. In so doing, urbanism can uncover spaces

for new solidarities within the urban scale that can emerge out of the recognition of the potential for political intensities in the city, exploring the lived inequalities and the everyday life of urban residents, and identifying the spatial challenges that are needed to achieve economic, social and political justice.

The articulation between different scales is not just a problem for cities in Chile. While the challenges in Chile are the result of decades of excessive attention to quantitative achievements and the provision of housing units with no attention to urban scale, many Latin American countries face the opposite challenge: an ever-growing quantitative deficit of housing provision that, in some cases, has been addressed by focusing on the provision of urban infrastructure. In both cases, the main challenge remains the same: the need for articulating different scales of action, from the household to the city, from the economic to the political sphere. The discipline of urbanism should play a central role in this task. And the case of Chile, which is seen by many countries as a model for scaling up quantitative solutions and decreasing housing deficit and poverty, should be looked at closely in order to understand the necessity for reconfiguring the relationship between housing and the city at the policy level. This is a task that embraces questions of space, design, and economic, social and political relationships.

Final comments: Reflecting on the role of housing

Before closing this thesis, this final space provides a last reflection about the meaning of housing, and why housing has been at the core of my thinking. One could say that the same issue that this thesis has addressed, namely, the role of a specific social policy in reducing inequalities, could have been tackled from many other perspectives: how education policies, labour policies, health policies, pensions, childhood policies and gender policies can contribute to reducing inequality, using a similar approach to that presented here – and this would be true. But this research has focused on housing policies for a series of reasons, most of them discussed earlier.

We want to return here to the idea referred by Cupers (2014) of the *social and material realm of everyday life*. Housing is the realisation of such a realm, it is its container,

crystallising dynamics, but also structuring these dynamics. Housing, as a spatial entity, is also the economic, social and political device where we position ourselves.

As a material realm, a physical space that supports daily life through the intimacy of the family, housing is also the support for activities and livelihoods. It is the place where we save our goods and shelter from the outside world, and also where we save and build (sometimes literally) our dreams, sorrows and aspirations. It is, for the majority of people, the most important material and economic resource they hold and treasure, and as such, the standpoint from which to combat economic inequalities.

As a location, housing is also our social position, the 'where' we live, located as part of a wider system of other 'wheres'. It is our gateway to the rest of the city, to the rest of the people and services, it is where we position ourselves when we claim our rights. It is then the place that allows us to build an identity in terms of our social rights, and to identify and overcome social inequalities.

And as a political device, housing holds personal and collective stories and allows building bonds that can eventually transfer into collective power. Housing struggles and processes are at the core of the transformation of our life, the stages for our families and community at multiple scales. There are social and power relationships that emerge from our homes and neighbourhoods, and as such, housing processes can have a structuring role in defining power positions and dealing with political inequalities.

The lack of housing means for many people the nonexistence of a space to ground these economic, social, and political positions. And this is why housing is a public matter, and not just an individual one, a political and collective problem rather than a personal one. And as a public matter it can be approached on the basis of universalist principles and not just the assignation of individual solutions and targeted measures. In the case of Chile, after decades of building and consolidating a *city for the poor* and a *city for the rich* as two separate entities, it is worth asking how universalist principles can help to shape a *city for everyone*, understanding that, even though some targeting actions are required in the field of housing, the construction of cities (the main outcome of housing production)

needs some universal guarantees to avoid the consolidation of segregation patterns that prevent housing from being the material realm, social asset and political device it can be.

Segregation and inequality are impossible to tackle from a residual targeting perspective, as they require an understanding of social services as rights, incorporating universal guarantees in every sector, and moving away from a subsidiary state towards one that is a duty bearer and guarantor of rights. Housing is not synonymous with just building houses, although the principles behind current housing policies and neoliberal ideas make us think this.

Space production, housing policies, and urban design require looking for new forms of solidarities and resistance in order to build politically feasible alternatives, digging in the present and the past to build hope, identifying cracks and obstacles from an intellectual and empirical perspective, and translating these into concrete alternatives and intellectual paths. The life, struggles and landscapes of BdM are the realisation of an approach to social housing in which the city for the poor was produced by *mere human life accumulation*, dismissing the fact that all of the individual stories that gather in BdM constitute together a single political and public problem, one that requires integral and ambitious interventions to ensure the flourishing of life. These ambitious interventions require an integral approach, and a renewed understanding of housing and urbanism, putting together different scales and spheres of action, coordinating the existing efforts of current policies and programmes, and identifying cracks to create new spaces for action and solidarity. In order to consolidate a collectively imagined future, this can build a path in which housing, the city, and the instruments that the state has for its production can contribute to creating a less unequal society.

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